PLAY METER Magazine

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II
The Revenge
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Inside:
Pinball Perspectives
Coin-op Women Speak Out

Volume 16, No. 7 For the Coin-Op Entertainment Industry June 1990

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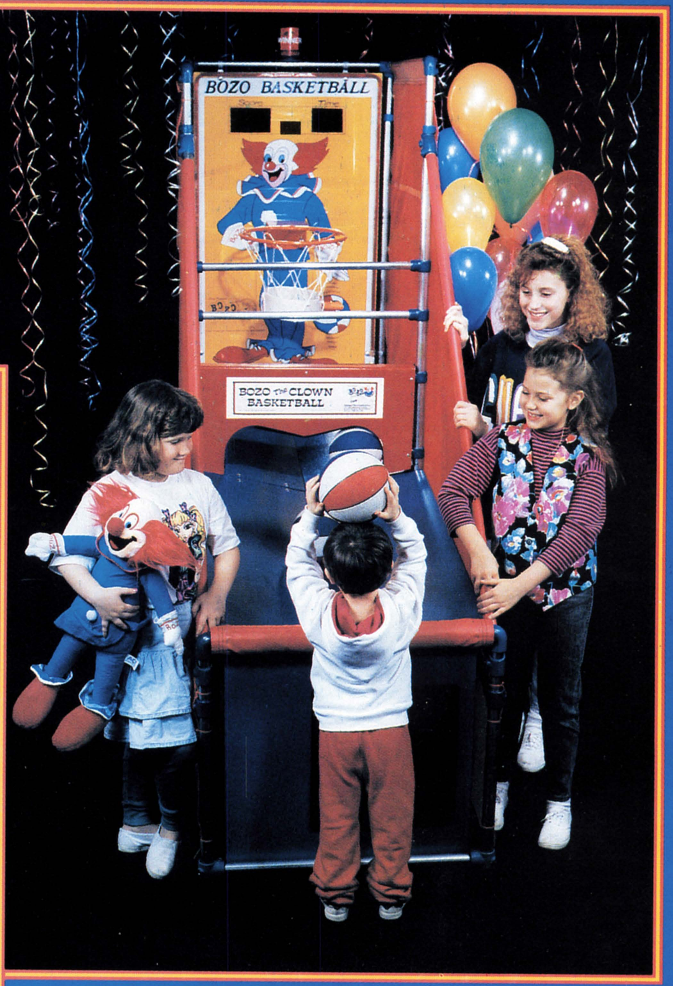
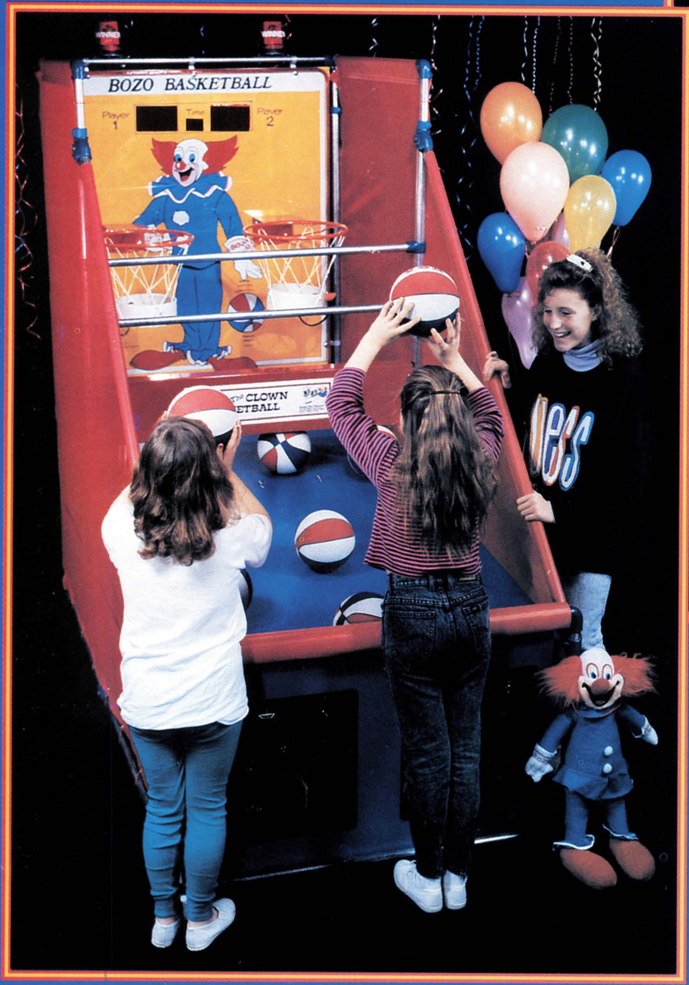

BOZO BASKETBALL
Score
Time
BOZO THE CLOWN BASKETBALL

SINGLE: 80"H x 89"L x 32"W


BOZO BASKETBALL
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Time
Player 2
THE CLOWN BASKETBALL

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NEWS BULLETIN

Time-Out chain sold... Contrary to a report in this issue's "News" section, it was learned at press time that Sega has in fact reached an agreement to sell its 88 game rooms and family entertainment centers in shopping malls. The buyer is Edison Brothers Stores Inc.

Time-Out is a U.S. division of Sega Enterprises Ltd. of Japan. Its sales for 1989 were about $33 million. Edison Brothers has also signed a consulting agreement with Sega of America.

"Sega is a pioneer in this field, and the operations we are acquiring include some mall entertainment centers, which are among the largest in the nation," said Andrew E. Newman, Edison chairman.

Added Martin Sneider, Edison president, "With the addition of the Time-Out units to the Space Port units we agreed to purchase last month, we will have achieved a combined base of about 140 entertainment operations in 30 states. It is a good foundation for future expansion in this growing branch of specialty retailing."

Nintendo donates $3 million... Nintendo Co. Ltd., the parent company of Nintendo of America Inc., will establish a fund at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's (MIT) Media Laboratory to support research into how children learn while they play.

The Nintendo Fund, endowed with $3 million from Nintendo, will support the work of Dr. Seymour A. Papert. A scholar known across the world for his invention of the "LOGO" computer language, Papert serves as director of learning research at the Media Laboratory. He develops high-tech learning tools for his research that "look and feel more like Nintendo games than school books."

Nintendo executives in Japan say the company's decision was based upon its recognition of the rapidly growing area of research on video games and learning. This research includes learning concepts such as "flow"—a state of deep and total absorption in a challenging activity—technological innovations such as "virtual reality," and other interactive multi-media products.

"As the world's largest video game maker, we have provided pleasure to countless young people while opening their vision to computer's unlimited potential for their future lives and careers," said Hiroshi Yamauchi, president of Nintendo Co. Ltd. "At the same time, we have long felt that we also owed a responsibility to develop our hardware and software to enhance educational opportunities. I am confident that with the Media Laboratory's proven ability, this program will contribute to a smarter generation than has ever existed before."

Korean counterfeiters nabbed... Korean copiers who manufactured and sold counterfeit PC boards of Konami Industry Co. Ltd.'s *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* were arrested by Korean police in late March for copyright infringement.

According to a Korean newspaper and Konami Industry, Ri Sang Pil, president of Kangsok Electronics, and Han Chang Hi, president of Pole Electronics, manufactured and sold 270 counterfeit *TMNT* boards. Seven other suspects were investigated but not arrested. Said Fumihiro Hishikawa, president of Konami Industry, "I think (the counterfeit exposure) could deal a serious blow to the copiers."

TMNT has not yet been shipped in the Japanese market. Thought the date hasn't been decided upon, when the game is released in Japan, it will be in PC-board form.

Booth space selling quickly... More than 90 percent of the booth space for AMOA Expo '90 has already been sold, five months before the Oct. 25-27 show dates. It will take place in New Orleans at the Convention Center.

As of late May, 155 companies had purchased 611 of the exhibition's 637 booths. Registration, housing, and program information for Expo '90 was recently mailed to thousands worldwide.

Educational seminars at Expo '90 will address such technical and management issues as the future of music (45s and CDs); pool table and pinball maintenance; the new jukebox licensing agreement; video gaming amusement equipment; employee/labor relations; business management; customer service; and pool and dart leagues.

Exhibiting, as well as registration and housing information, can be obtained by contacting AMOA, 111 E. Wacker Drive, Suite 600, Chicago, IL 60601; (312) 565-4602; FAX (312) 565-4658.

Roth dies... Industry veteran Marvin Roth, owner of Roth Novelty Co. in Wilkes-Barre, Pa., passed away on May 12 at the age of 64. He suffered a heart attack while driving home after a round of golf.

Besides his achievements in coin-op, Roth was instrumental in developing The Station Complex (now known as Market Street Square) in Wilkes-Barre. Additionally, Roth was currently serving as chairman of the board of trustees for the United Hebrew Institute in Kingston, Pa. He was also an active member of numerous other social and civic organizations.

Roth is survived by, among others, his mother, wife, three children, and three grandchildren. Memorial contributions may be made to the American Heart Association or the United Hebrew Institute.

Coast to Coast adds Vananda... Bill Vananda, formerly of Intermark Amusements, has joined Coast to Coast Amusement Game Distributors Inc. in a sales capacity. He has experience in all facets of the coin-op industry, including manufacturing and operating.

Compasio passes away... Play Meter extends its deepest sympathies to good friend Camille Compasio, *Cashbox* coin-op editor, on the death of her beloved brother Anthony Compasio, who died on April 29 in Chicago. He was 56 years old. Anthony also left behind his wife and three children.

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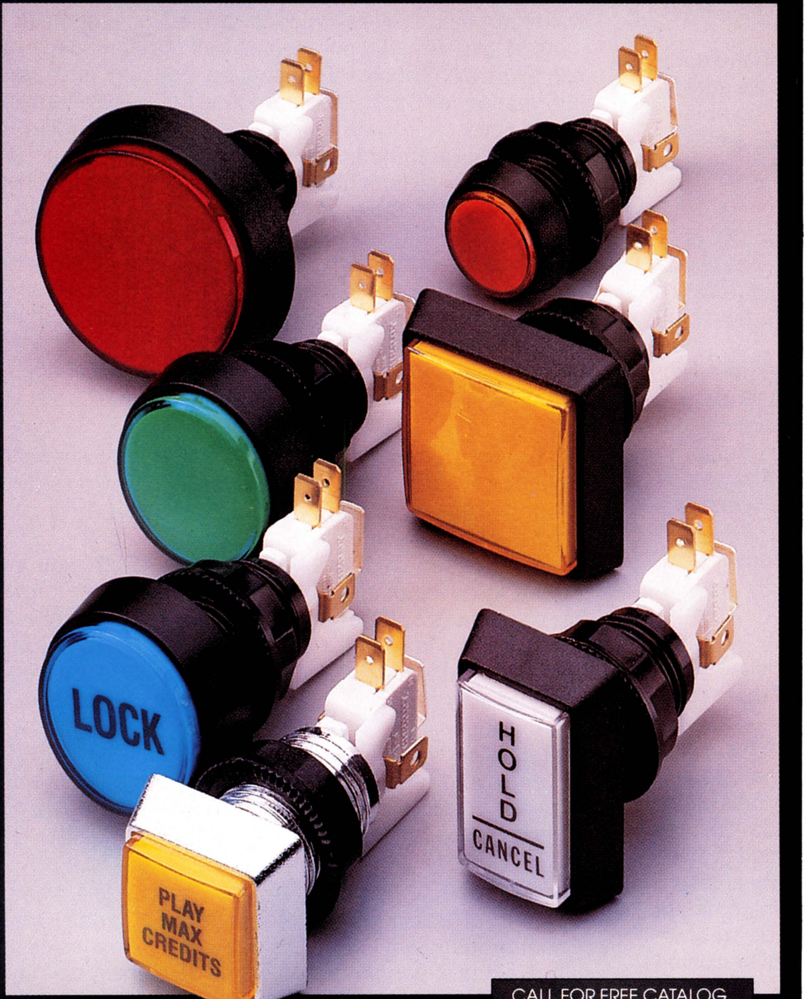

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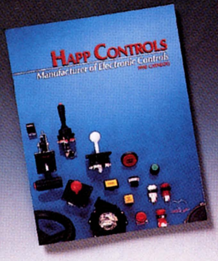

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PLAYERS WILL LOVE HOW IT PERFORMS IN THE AIR.

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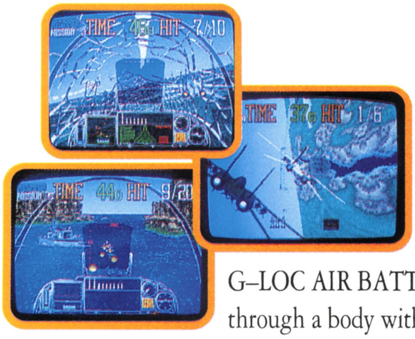

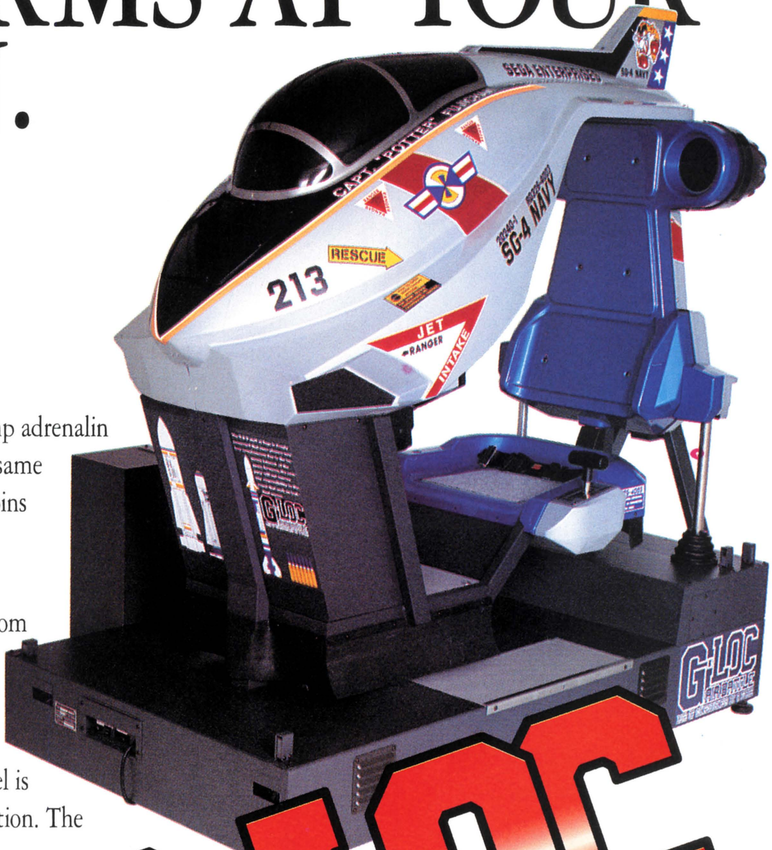

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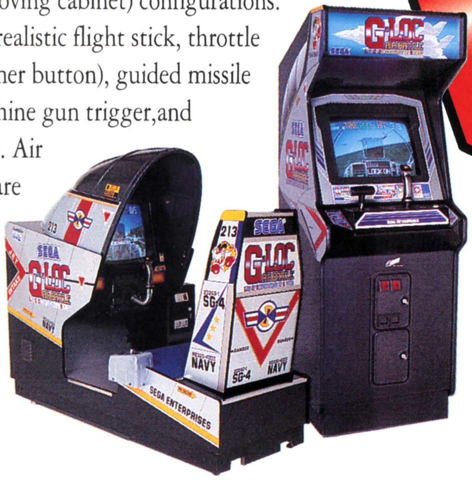

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Volume 16, No. 7 June 1990

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Over 200 industry members and their families championed coin-op interests on Capitol Hill this year. Learn about the major issues discussed with elected officials, and follow the travels of one Midwestern operator and his family who participated for the first time.

Pinball Perspectives 58

Four separate articles on pinball await: an interview with game designers, backglass art appreciation, an early history of the game, plus a look at pinball choices for summer '90 and a collector's fascination with a '70s classic.

Coin-op women speak out 90

Call it a "fireside chat" if you will, but when five industry women got together to "talk shop" this spring, some interesting subjects surfaced. Each tells her story of entering the amusement business and succeeding in a male-dominated industry.

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COVER

American Technos has earned the reputation of quality game producer, witnessed by such titles as *Double Dragon, WWF Superstars, Block Out,* and the new *Combatribes.*

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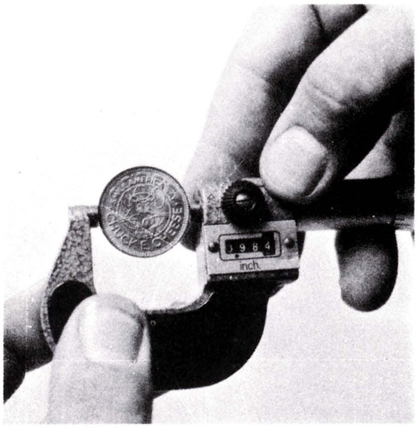

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EQUIPMENT POLL

Buying the right game is a "make-or-break" proposition for the operator, who must have both monthly and ongoing analyses of game performance. This chart is designed to give the operator information he needs to guide his purchases. The "longevity indicator" will tell him how long the game has remained high on the chart. The number of months on the Top 10 is important, as is the total number of months on the chart. Future months will include how long the game was in coin-op before being released for the home market. Look to the chart each month for additional polling information.

VIDEO & PINBALL COMBINED

GAME	MFG.	POINT VALUE	MONTHS ON CHART	MONTHS IN TOP 10	LONGEVITY POINTS
1. Final Fight	Capcom	9.28	4	4	198
2. TMNT (dedicated)	Konami	9.24	6	6	298
3. Hard Drivin'	Atari	8.94	14	14	678
4. Whirlwind	Williams	8.78	4	4	189
5. Mercs	Capcom	8.33	1	1	46
6. Elvira/Party Monsters	Bally/Midway	8.28	7	7	290
7. Phantom of the Opera	Data East	8.23	2	2	76
8. D.J. Boy	American Sammy	8.15	1	1	43
9. Earthshaker	Williams	8.05	14	14	632
10. Police Force	Williams	7.90	8	8	345
11. Final Lap	Atari	7.77	13	12	471
12. Four Trax	Atari	7.70	4	4	162
13. WWF Super Stars	American Technos	7.66	11	10	461
14. Super Off Road	Leland	7.50	14	14	632
15. Pool Sharks	Bally/Midway	7.44	1	1	36
16. Golden Axe	Sega	7.37	11	11	449
17. Cyclone	Williams	7.29	14	14	534
18. Aliens	Konami	7.23	2	1	56
19. Cyberball 2072	Atari	7.09	8	6	261
20. Beast Busters	SNK	7.07	4	3	118
21. Bally Game Show	Bally/Midway	7.07	3	1	59
22. Mousin' Around	Bally/Midway	7.04	5	3	90
23. Jokerz!	Williams	7.03	13	12	414
24. Track-Pak	Leland	6.96	1	1	27
25. Taxi	Williams	6.93	14	12	417
26. M.V.P.	Sega	6.93	1	1	25
27. Toki	Fabtek	6.89	6	5	177
28. Out Run	Sega	6.88	14	11	475
29. Monday Night Football	Data East	6.84	8	7	251
30. All American Football	Leland	6.78	7	7	245
31. Buster Bros.	Capcom	6.73	5	2	92
32. Black Knight 2000	Williams	6.72	10	8	255
33. Final Blow	Romstar	6.70	1	0	18
34. Arch Rivals	Bally/Midway	6.69	11	8	346
35. Chase M.Q.	Taito	6.64	14	9	391
36. Tetris	Atari	6.62	10	6	150
37. Air Buster	Sharp Image	6.60	1	0	14
38. Capcom Bowling	Capcom	6.58	10	8	146
39. Mechanized Attack	SNK	6.54	10	5	215
40. Midnight Resistance	Data East	6.54	6	3	117
41. Operation Thunderbolt	Taito	6.50	14	13	513
42. Silver Slugger	Premier	6.50	2	1	49
43. Bad Cats	Williams	6.47	5	4	131
44. S.T.U.N. Runner	Atari	6.45	6	4	156
45. R-Type II	Irem	6.44	1	0	6
46. Smash-TV	Williams	6.43	1	0	5
47. Team Quarterback	Leland	6.42	14	6	327
48. Cadash	Taito	6.42	1	0	3
49. Super Monaco GP	Sega	6.38	4	1	60
50. Super Hang On	Sega	6.36	12	1	199

EQUIPMENT POLL

VIDEO KITS

GAME	MFG.	POINT VALUE
1. Final Fight	Capcom	9.28
2. D.J. Boy	American Sammy	8.15
3. WWF Super Stars	American Technos	7.66
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15. Air Buster	Sharp Image	6.60
16. Capcom Bowling	Capcom	6.58
17. Midnight Resistance	Data East	6.54
18. R-Type II	Irem	6.44
19. Cadash	Taito	6.42
20. Crime City	Taito	6.35
21. RoadBlasters	Atari	6.27
22. U. N. Squadron	Capcom	6.26
23. Championship Sprint	Atari	6.15
24. Cabal	Fabtek	6.09
25. Dragon Breed	Irem	6.07

VIDEO DEDICATED

GAME	MFG.	POINT VALUE
1. TMNT	Konami	9.24
2. Hard Drivin'	Atari	8.94
3. Mercs	Capcom	8.33
4. Final Lap	Atari	7.77
5. Four Trax	Atari	7.70
6. Super Off Road	Leland	7.50
7. Beast Busters	SNK	7.07
8. Out Run	Sega	6.88
9. Chase H.Q.	Taito	6.64
10. Mechanized Attack	SNK	6.54

PINBALLS

GAME	MFG.	POINT VALUE
1. Whirlwind	Williams	8.78
2. Elvira/Party Monsters	Bally/Midway	8.28
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13. Black Knight 2000	Williams	6.72
14. Silver Slugger	Premier	6.50
15. Bad Cats	Williams	6.47

FROM THE EDITOR

Glad they got to know us a little better

A couple of months ago Gerry Durnell, publisher and editor of Pizza Today magazine, visited New Orleans on business. Since we are in the same field—putting out a trade magazine—he called and asked if I wanted to have dinner with him. Of course! When do I get a chance to talk to someone who understands things like "writer's block."

Though we had never met before, many long telephone conversations fairly convinced me that we were already friends. I got to the meeting place; we had no problems making the connection. We chatted for a long time about how we "do things." After all, no one can really understand the deadlines and problems like someone else faced with the same nightmares. But we both love what we are doing.

As we made our way into the heart of town and the seafood restaurant on Bourbon Street, Gerry's eyes scanned the street, and he was able to point out the pizza establishments along the way. Funny thing; I have been down that street numerous times and never once noticed those places. But then again, I don't write about pizza every month.

I realized that I am the same way about games. I can spot a game from outside the location. I can even tell the name of the game by its decals. In movies, you better believe I pick out the games that characters are playing or those shown in the background of the scene. But I am writing about games every month; it's my job.

After Gerry's visit, I started thinking about how others perceive our industry. Maybe he was thinking about how the public views pizza. Anyway, I was aware that the public is not all that concerned about what our business is. After all, why should they take any time or effort to understand it? That's not their job. What does concern them is when it affects them. If little Johnny is spending too much time and money at the local arcade, then mom and dad will start thinking about arcades; I doubt it will be very favorable. Johnny complains that the game "ate" his money and gave him nothing back in return, and parents begin wondering if there should be such things.

Many of us in the industry just spent three days in our nation's capital in a massive lobbying effort. Many more senators, congressmen, and their assistants know about the coin-op industry than they did before. It was overwhelming to see senators and congressmen and their families truly enjoying themselves at the Congressional Reception. One of Louisiana's congressmen, Billy Tauzin, and his wife, Gail, brought their three children. Though they had planned to leave early for a previous dinner engagement, Gail and Billy both joined the basketball, dart, and pinball tournaments! Last year one of their sons won $350 for his favorite charity and was ready to win again. The results aren't in yet, but I'm sure pulling for him!

This is our industry, our livelihood. We are proud of it. It gave me a warm feeling to see so many get involved in this tremendous public relations effort. I wouldn't be surprised if a few more of our lawmakers now have a better understanding of what we are all about. ☐

Valerie Cognevich

Valerie Cognevich
Editor

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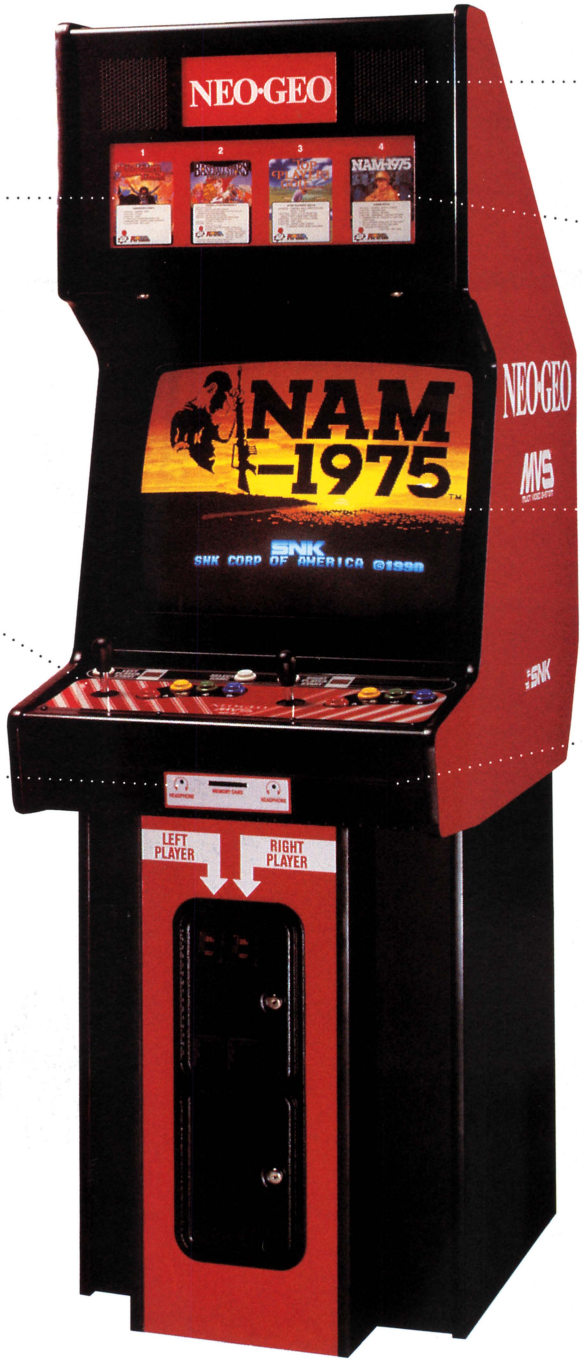
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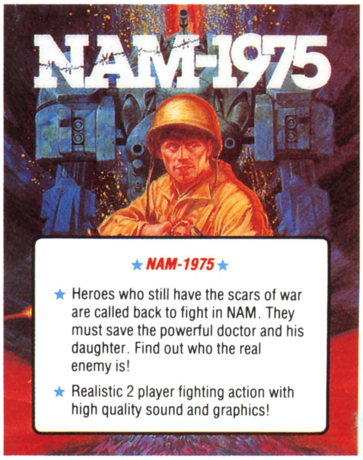

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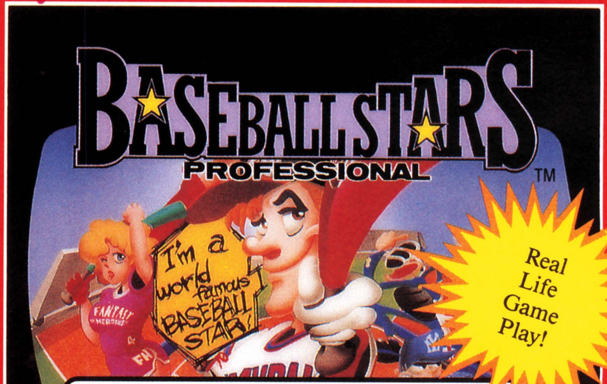
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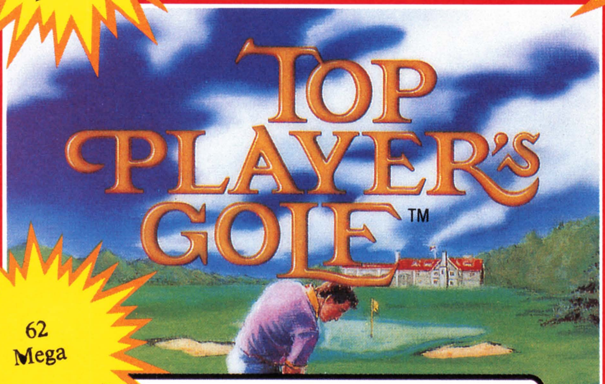

62 Mega

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Suzuki takes over as Taito president

Minoru Suzuki has been named the new president of Taito America Corp., succeeding Joe Dillon, who resigned on April 16. Suzuki, the former director of international sales for Taito Corp. Japan, will be responsible for the entire U.S. operations.

According to Taito Japan officials, the presidential change was made in compliance with the company's "new management strategies for globalization in an effort to strengthen sales, stabilize company policies, and increase management efficiency." Service to customers will be improved, they say, through a closer business link between Japan and the United States.

Yoshi Suzuki and Rick Rochetti will remain as executive vice president and vice president of sales, respectively.

As for Dillon, he isn't sure yet what direction his coin-op career will take. "I'm still sifting through my options," he said.

In other news concerning Taito America, Pete O'Neill, the director of intellectual security, and advertising head Nancy Goodwin have left the company. It is unclear whether O'Neill's position will be filled, while Goodwin's advertising duties have been assumed by Rochetti, Natalie Kulig, and Jim Chapman.

Musci joins software company

Ray Musci, who worked most recently for Data East USA as executive vice president/general manager, is one of the three principals at a new company, Ocean of America Inc. The others are John Woods and David Ward.

Based in San Jose, Calif., Ocean of America is an affiliate of Ocean Software Limited in the United Kingdom. The company develops personal computer software.

"We, the affiliate company, have signed a licensing agreement with Nintendo to publish software titles for the Nintendo Entertainment System (NES) and Game Boy," Musci said. "In the next 12 months, or maybe sooner, we plan to expand into coin-op products. I'm excited about what I've seen so far."

Ray Musci

Jukebox update

June 1 was the deadline for jukebox operators to execute a new jukebox licensing agreement without fear of legal action from the performing rights organizations for non-compliance. Until that date, they had agreed not to pursue infringements occurring prior to June 15, 1990.

Operators who were licensed with the Copyright Office in 1988 and/or '89 should have received new license applications in late April, according to ASCAP's Bill Lee.

"It's hard to say now how operators have responded, in terms of compliance levels, because the deadline isn't until June 1," said Lee in early May. "I compare it to owing taxes to the government. You tend to wait until the last possible moment before paying."

Operators who didn't receive the new applications, or who need information on the matter of licensing, can call Lee directly at ASCAP, (212) 870-7578. This is until the newly created Jukebox License Office has its apparatus intact, which was expected to be late May or early June. When operational, that office's telephone number will be (212) 581-0190.

Lipkin departs MicroProse Games

MicroProse Software is readying for general distribution of its first coin-op arcade game, *F-15 Strike Eagle*, later this summer. But Gene Lipkin, vice president of MicroProse Games, won't be there to see the finished product. He has left to pursue other endeavors. At press time, Lipkin was negotiating with Data East USA for a possible position with that company.

"I have worked with a terrific group of people who have made an outstanding product," Lipkin said. "Now that the product is ready for distribution, it is time for me to pursue other opportunities, even though it is very hard to leave."

Said MicroProse president Bill Stealy, "It was well known that this was a long-term project when we began to apply our game expertise in this new arena almost three years ago. (MicroProse Software develops state-of-the-art entertainment software for personal computers.) We were extremely fortunate to have found Gene Lipkin during our start-up to help form a tremendously dedicated team of experts to take us through our first phase of development."

Tom Dechant, formerly with Gould Inc., will be consulting through the final phases of development, testing, and product launch. *F-15 Strike Eagle* received numerous favorable comments at ACME '90, where it was shown in its early stages at the company's suite. Based on the best-selling computer game of the same name, it is projected to sell between 8,000 and 10,000 units worldwide by the end of the year, company officials said.

Atlas opens Indy branch

Atlas Distributing opened a new 8,100-square-foot office in Indianapolis, Ind., on May 17. Serving as key employees there are Jim Abbott, branch manager; Jim McNally, vending manager; and Jill Reams, parts manager.

Atlas president Jerry Marcus says the office hasn't fully settled on the product lines to be carried, but they will include most of the major ones already handled at the Chicago branch.

''We will be the only distributorship in the state of Indiana that doesn't also operate,'' Marcus said. ''This is a significant thing. Many operators in Indiana have complained that they don't like dealing with distributors who operate as well. The Indianapolis office gives us the triangle of Chicago, Grand Rapids, and Indianapolis. Each is within four or five driving hours of one another.''

The address is 1341 Sadlier Circle So. Drive, Indianapolis, IN 46235. The telephone number is (317) 322-0104.

AAMA lends child abuse prevention help

AAMA executive vice president Bob Fay (l) and president Gil Pollock (r) accept a special award honoring the coin-op industry for work against child abuse. It was presented by Judy Rhodes, executive director of the Washington, D.C., chapter of the NCPCA.

The American Amusement Machine Association (AAMA) continues to take an active role in educating the public about the evils of child abuse. The association was a key participant in this year's national kick-off of Child Abuse Prevention Month, held April 2 in Washington, D.C.

AAMA president Gil Pollock unveiled the third public awareness poster—produced by AAMA on behalf of the National Committee for Prevention of Child Abuse—during a press briefing at the Amidon Elementary School. He spoke about the industry's commitment to this issue.

''As an industry, we feel it is important to participate with the organizations that seek to safeguard the youths in this country,'' Pollock said. ''We believe these posters send a wonderful message to children and their families.'' This year's poster features Fred Savage, star of ''The Wonder Years'' TV show. Don Mattingly and John Madden were the subjects for the other two posters.

At a private dinner hosted by the amusement machine association for the NCPCA and area chapters, Pollock and AAMA executive vice president Bob Fay accepted an award on behalf of the industry for its continued dedication to child abuse prevention.

Video museum on tour

Starting in June, the video game exhibit ''Hot Circuits: A Video Arcade'' will pull up stakes from its New York museum residency and head out on the road. The world's first such retrospective of video games will be exhibited in 10 U.S. cities.

The participating museums include the Science Museum of Connecticut in West Hartford; the Space Coast Science Museum in Melbourne, Fla.; Discovery Place in Charlotte, N.C.; the Miami Museum of Science; the Cumberland Science Museum in Nashville; the Science Museum of Virginia in Richmond; the Detroit Science Center; the Pacific Science Center in Seattle; the Franklin Institute in Philadelphia; and Great Explorations in St. Petersburg, Fla.

Judge sides with Atlantic & Pacific

In a pre-trial hearing of a lawsuit brought by Yamate USA Corp. against Atlantic & Pacific Amusement Corp., Judge Harold Ackerman ruled that A & P did not infringe on any copyright concerning the video card game *Lucky 8 Line*. A & P contended that the game was in the public domain.

Yamate sought a preliminary injunction that would've prevented A & P from marketing the game, as well as an impoundment order. Ackerman determined that Yamate failed to demonstrate at least a reasonable likelihood of success if the suit were to go to trial. Therefore, both of its requests were denied.

The key issue centered on when *Lucky 8 Line* was actually created and offered for sale. A game can only become public domain if it is sold without a copyright for at least five years. Yamate claimed the game was only sold from 1985, but Ackerman held that A & P presented ''weighty evidence that the game was published in 1983, six years before issuance of the registration.'' A & P produced over 15 affidavits from distributors, stating that they had bought, sold, and operated *Lucky 8 Line* games in 1983.

Koenigsberg named Robbins recipient

Steve Koenigsberg, president of State Sales & Service in Baltimore, has been named the 1990 winner of the Joe Robbins Award, given each spring to a member of the U.S. coin-op industry for "outstanding participation, contribution, and service."

Koenigsberg has been an active member of the industry since 1982, when he took over as company president for his father, David, who retired after 45 years in the industry. Koenigsberg joined AAMA in 1986 and has sat on its board of directors from 1987 to 1990. He was AAMA vice president from 1988 to 1989.

In receiving the award on May 2 from Robbins, he said, "It is an honor to be recognized for making a contribution to the industry. This industry is a long-term investment, and to make a difference every member must understand that. Everyone in the industry has a responsibility to go beyond the day-to-day activities and do what works for the industry's overall good."

Other recipients of the award include Frank Ballouz, Bill Cravens, John Blouin, Norman Goldstein, Don Osborne, and Robbins himself.

Mel Harp, pictured here with his wife Mildred, has informed us that he's no longer retired. As Mel said, "You can't keep an old fire horse away from the fire." He is now working with Bob Jordan of Jordan Equipment Co. in Lubbock, Texas. The company buys and sells new and used coin-op equipment and vending machines.

Carol Tomme

IT names Tomme

Incredible Technologies (IT) Inc. has appointed Carol Tomme as its new director of communications. She will be directing strategic marketing communications, public relations, and advertising for IT and its new marketing subsidiary, Strata Inc.

"IT has grown to the point where we need someone with Carol's background to help us communicate the strengths we bring to the amusement industry," said Elaine Ditton, president of IT. "We're delighted to have her on board."

Said Tomme, "Incredible Technologies is a special group of talented individuals who are using their creativity to further the growth and acceptance of video and pinball games. I'm proud to be a member of the team and I intend to help spread the word about just how great IT's people and products are."

Nintendo pursues software pirates

The immense popularity currently being enjoyed by the consumer video game market has not come without pitfalls. As its coin-op brethren have long known, there are unscrupulous people out there waiting to exploit this success through illegal means. We're talking, of course, about counterfeiters.

Nintendo of America has launched an aggressive campaign against this scourge. The company is directing it against video rental outlets and other retailers, distributors, and importers who are renting or selling counterfeit Nintendo video game cartridges for play on the NES.

Lawsuits for copyright infringement have already been filed in U.S. District Courts in California, Minnesota, and Florida to halt the sale of counterfeit Nintendo software. Additional such suits have and will be filed in Canada.

"What's happening here is an outrageous theft of Nintendo's valuable intellectual property rights," said Nintendo senior vice president Howard Lincoln. "Crooks in the Far East have made verbatim copies of legitimate Nintendo video games and have packaged these counterfeits in multiple game cartridges. We intend to protect the enormous investment made by this company and its authorized developers. To that end, we plan to sue (those) who deal in counterfeit Nintendo software."

Lincoln isn't merely blowing smoke. On April 12, for example, U.S. Customs agents arrested four people in Wilmington, N.C., for dealing in counterfeit Nintendo video game cartridges. Those arrested included a Taiwanese couple who were caught bringing counterfeit games into the country. An elaborate undercover 'sting' operation involving hidden cameras, microphones, and some $10,000 in marked money helped apprehend them.

Gray Stowers

Stowers appointed

Music & Games International in Marietta, Ga., has named Gray Stowers of Stowers Leasing as its vice president of the commercial vending division. He will be responsible for the entire state of Georgia.

Stowers has been involved in Georgia's vending industry for over 17 years. In 1988, he served as membership co-chairman for the Georgia Amusement & Music Operators Association (GAMOA) board of directors.

"I feel this is a winning team for the operation in Georgia," said Music & Games International president Michael DeMoya.

Time Out buy-out rumors said false

Rumors have been floating about concerning a possible sale by Sega of its huge chain of "Time Out" arcades. According to John Denlinger, the vice president of operations, it's just that: rumors.

"I've heard these rumors, too, but to my knowledge they are untrue. Sega has not sold the chain," he said.

Moss receives Valley award

Valley Recreation Products has named Moss Distributing Co. of Des Moines, Iowa, its "Most Improved Distributor" award for 1989. The award—a cougar's head mounting—was presented to Terry Moss at a ceremony conducted in Des Moines. It goes to the distributor who has best accomplished goals and shown a major improvement in released markets.

"Moss Distributing Co. are among a close-knit family of distributors who carry the Valley product line of pool tables and electronic dart games," said Alan Schafer, Valley's vice president of marketing. "They have performed exceptionally well throughout the year."

Dave Kristal (l), promotions manager for Valley Recreation Products, presents the company's "Most Improved Distributor" award to Terry Moss of Moss Distributing Co.

Wildcat ties in with NSM-Loewen

Wildcat Chemical Co. of Fort Worth, Texas, has entered into an agreement with Germany's NSM-Loewen to distribute its chemical maintenance products. The initial distributing will cover all of West Germany and extend into other European countries by mid-1991, according to Wildcat president Joe Peters. Production began around May 15, and the first delivery is set to arrive in Koln, West Germany, near June 15.

"Wildcat Chemical has been in Europe and many other companies for several years, but we are looking forward to the vast and organized coverage that NSM-Loewen can provide for us," Peters said. "This agreement constitutes a major step forward in truly making Wildcat a recognized company worldwide."

Coincidently, the agreement comes on the eve of Wildcat's 20th anniversary in the amusement and casino industries. The company is recognized as the world leader in manufacturing cleaning products for video games, pinball machines, pool tables, jukeboxes, foosball and air hockey tables, and other coin-op equipment.

NAMA sets agenda for education summit

Topics such as "How to Structure a Vending Route," "Drugs in the Workplace," "Vending and the Environment," and "The Power of Excellent Customer Service" will be covered at the National Automatic Merchandising Association's (NAMA) National Education Conference, to be held Aug. 15-18 in Chicago. It will take place at the Ambassador West Hotel.

The conference's format provides two-and-a-half days of "cafeteria-style" educational programming, with delegates free to choose the topics that most interest them from three concurrent sessions.

"We have strengthened the program to be even more useful for owners, managers, and employees of vending operations," said NAMA president James Rost. "It's a chance to gain better insight into their customers' needs and concerns, as well as obtain information valuable to managing small businesses in general."

To register, or receive more information about the conference, contact Richard Geerdes, NAMA, 20 N. Wacker Drive, Suite 3500, Chicago, IL 60606-3102; (312) 346-0370.

"Gee, dad, you haven't won any prizes for us *yet!*" Betson Enterprises' John Margold tries his luck on a *Fantasy Island* rotary at Atari's Commander Ragtime arcade in Orlando. John was unsuccessful in his attempts to win merchandise for children Matthew and Allison. As he said, 'It was only fitting that I would lose money in a game that I sold!"

Mountain Coin opens Vegas office

Mountain Coin Machine Distributors celebrated the grand opening of its Las Vegas office on April 27. The address is 5675 South Valley View, Las Vegas, NV 89118. For more information, contact Bill Britton at (702) 798-0900. The FAX is (702) 798-8431.

AAMA honors Brady

The first AAMA President's Award has been given to Brady Distributing president Jon Brady for his "willingness to go the extra mile in the best interest of the association and the industry." The winner is decided upon by the AAMA president —currently Gil Pollock—and members of the staff.

Brady Distributing is based in Charlotte, N.C. Brady himself served on the AAMA board of directors from 1986 to 1990. He received the award during the association's May 2 annual meeting in Washington, D.C.

"Jon has been a tireless supporter of the association's efforts," said AAMA executive vice president Bob Fay. "He has never failed to lend technical support for enforcement efforts when asked. Jon is always willing to do whatever is necessary to ensure the success of AAMA programs." □

These lucky distributors enjoy Atari's hospitality at its annual distributor meeting, held in Hawaii in mid-May. Look for expanded coverage in our July issue.

These AMOA board of directors and some of their spouses recently participated in the "Bob Nims/AMOA Directors Golf Tournament," held during the board's mid-year meeting in Palm Springs, Calif. The 12th annual tournament, staged at the Indian Wells golf course, was renamed this year to honor long-time tournament chairman and AMOA past president Bob Nims (pictured center, next to the bearded Ted Furkin) of A.M.A. Distributors in Metairie, La.

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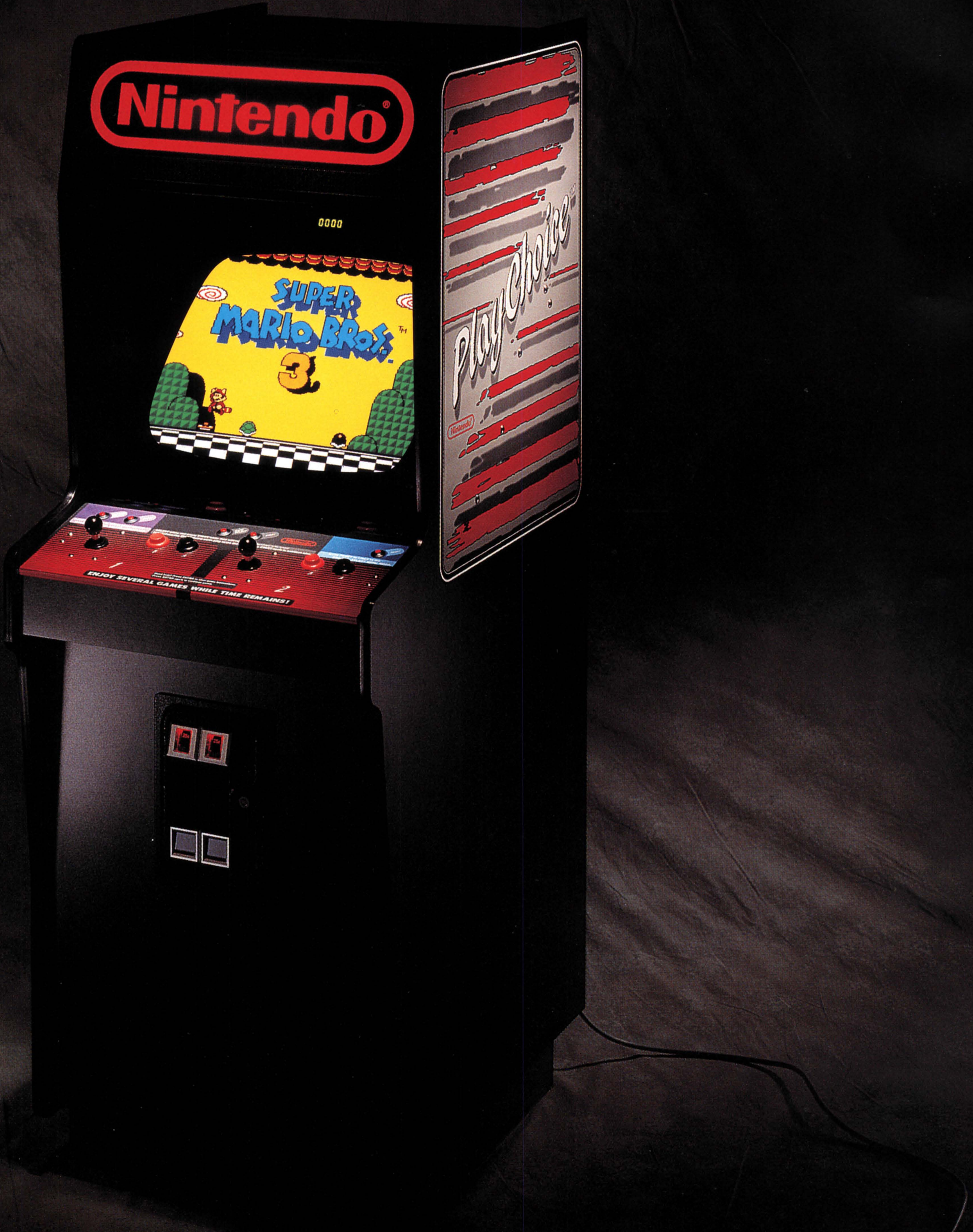
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STATE UPDATE

Illinois

Where is the coin-op industry headed? Operators in Illinois will try to answer this question when they meet for the 1990 Illinois Coin Machine Operators Association (ICMOA) Annual Meeting. It will take place June 15-17 at the Clarion Inn at Eagle Creek, located in Findlay, Ill.

The hot topic of video pokers is on the agenda. Ray Shroyer, ICMOA's chairman of the Truth in Amusement Committee, will apprise attendees of plans for legalization in Illinois. Montana's Phil Benson, a driving force behind that state's successful video poker bill, will also speak.

In conjunction with the celebration of pinball's 60th anniversary, a manufacturers' workshop will be conducted. Operators will be given tips on how to set up pinball machines to gain maximum income. Also, AAMA and Premier/Gottlieb president Gil Pollock will share his views with the group.

Finally, a PAC (political action committee) silent and live auction is slated. The proceeds will be used to acquaint legislators with the coin-op industry and its needs.

For more information, contact ICMOA, 710 E. Ogden Ave., Suite 113, Naperville, IL 60563; (708) 369-2406.

Pennsylvania

Brian O'Connor, the chief of police in Bridgewater, has been placed on probation because of his status as part-owner of video poker machines confiscated by police last year. It was the largest gambling raid ever conducted in the state.

State police in Butler, Pa., charged O'Connor with obstructing the administration of law last September. He has been accepted into the Accelerated Rehabilitative Disposition Program, an alternative to a trial. If all conditions of the 30-day probation (he was also fined $300) are fulfilled, the charges against O'Connor will be dismissed and he will have no record of criminal conviction.

The charges were made five months after a gambling raid in the county, which yielded 445 video poker machines from 244 establishments. They were being operated illegally, police say, because payoffs were made to patrons. A task force of state troopers, county detectives, state liquor control agents, and local police took part in the raid. They hoped to unearth racketeering activity.

Charges were filed against O'Connor as a partner in B&B Vending, which police identified as owning 10 of the machines. The company operated out of his home. Bruce Reed, co-owner of B&B Vending, was not charged.

Wisconsin

A bill that would've legalized video poker machines has died after failing to make it to the Senate floor before the Wisconsin Legislature adjourned. It had been drafted at the behest of the Wisconsin Amusement and Music Operators (WAMO) and received a favorable hearing by the Committee on Labor, Business, Insurance, Veterans' and Military Affairs.

SB-299 was legislation based on Montana's video poker law. About the time it was introduced in Wisconsin, South Dakota welcomed in legalized video poker machines. After WAMO representatives went to South Dakota to see how the law was being implemented, they decided that Wisconsin would be better served to model its legislation after South Dakota—not Montana.

While substitute amendments were drafted to make the legislation closer to that of South Dakota, developments took place that made legislators wary of tackling video poker legalization. This, combined with little time remaining in the 1989-90 session, led WAMO to back-off the issue.

A new bill will be re-introduced early next session. By that time, the association feels the climate will be more conducive to passing video poker legislation once and for all. □

GUEST COMMENTARY

Randy Fromm

Unsung Heroes

I get to meet a lot of operators at the ACME and AMOA trade shows, and also through the arcade school classes that I teach across the country. Recently, I had an operator ask me if I thought the distributors would rather I didn't teach operators and mechanics how to repair things like monitors and power supplies.

I assured him that this was not the case. For example, at their request, I will be holding a school at Palmetto State Distributing in Columbia, S.C., next month. Like all distributors, Palmetto State wants its operator customers to be as self-sufficient as possible. But when the need arises, it is the distributor that operators turn to for expert technical assistance.

Quite frankly, although I repair a lot of monitors and power supplies, I depend on distributors for complex microprocessor repair. Because they work on this stuff every day, the distributor's technicians are much more familiar with the boards than I am. This is especially true when it comes to a video game system that involves a large number of custom integrated circuits.

In the area where I live and work we are fortunate to have a highly competent service department in C.A. Robinson and Co. To be honest, I don't even know the people who work in the repair shop. All I know is that we send it to them broken and they send it back fixed! Often the unsung heroes of the coin-op industry, the distributor's technicians are the "upper echelon" of the repair chain and I simply want to take a moment to officially salute them for their excellent work. □

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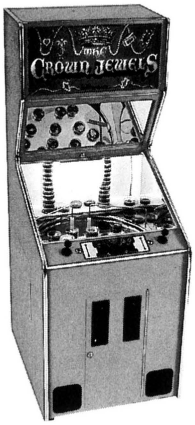

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Redemption is big

Don't you know that Ronald Reagan, with all of his popularity, would never have been elected if he had to rely on write-in votes like you are expecting operators to do on your equipment poll ballot with redemption games.

Don't you guys know that redemption is BIG—maybe bigger than you realize. We shouldn't be lumped into "other games" on your ballot.

We think that *Boom Ball, Knock Down, Big Mouth, Skee-Ball, Bowler Roller,* etc., should be listed under a separate category called "redemption games." We think that machines like the *Love Tester, Sex Tester, Strength Tester,* etc., should be in "Novelty Games" or "Other Games." Let us hear what you think.

Mel McEwan
Meltec
San Jose, Calif.

Mel, you are right about redemption being big, but it hasn't escaped our attention. Within the next couple of months we will be adding redemption to our equipment poll. Thanks for the suggestion.

More on redemption

We appreciate your efforts to draw attention to the redemption market. I hear from operators every day that want to know which distributors have this equipment. We feel that redemption is an important part of the industry. The coin-op industry needs to know that Exidy cares and is addressing the needs of the operators.

Virginia Kauffman
Exidy
Redding, Calif.

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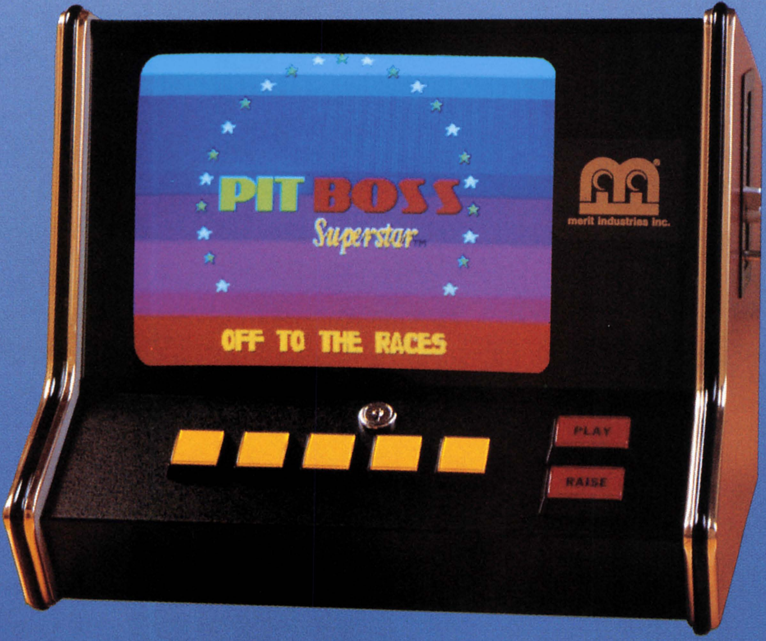

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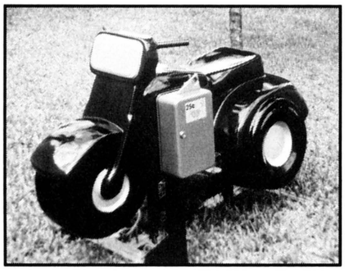

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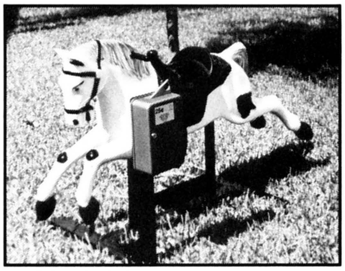

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LETTERS

It was g-r-e-a-t!

I would like to congratulate you on the wonderful ACME '90 wrap-up issue. Your coverage of the show and the color photographs were fantastic.

Our *Phantom of the Opera* pinball machine is also fantastic. I am enclosing some test reports from operators indicating that it is probably one of the best pinball machines ever made!

Gary Stern
Data East Pinball
Melrose Park, Ill.

A job well-done

I just wanted to say again how much we appreciate the excellent job you did on the Joe Robbins book. I know that Joe was extremely pleased. I guess each year we learn a little more about how to get the job done and on time! Again, our thanks for a beautifully done book!

Bob Fay
AAMA
Alexandria, Va.

I'd like to take this opportunity to say that the charitable efforts done through the American Amusement Machine Charitable Foundation are truly worthwhile, not just for the manufacturers, but for the industry as a whole. Last year the foundation raised $100,000, which went to Tomorrow's Children, chosen by honoree Bert Betti. This year, although we don't have final numbers, we should come close to that, with the proceeds going to Starting Now, which was chosen by this year's honoree, Joe Robbins. The dinner held during ACME and the book that Bob referred to is done to raise money for a special charity chosen by the honoree. It is supported by many who see the benefits of us working as an industry to give something back to those who are less fortunate. Although it seems far into the future, please remember to show your support when you are called upon next year.

Award winner

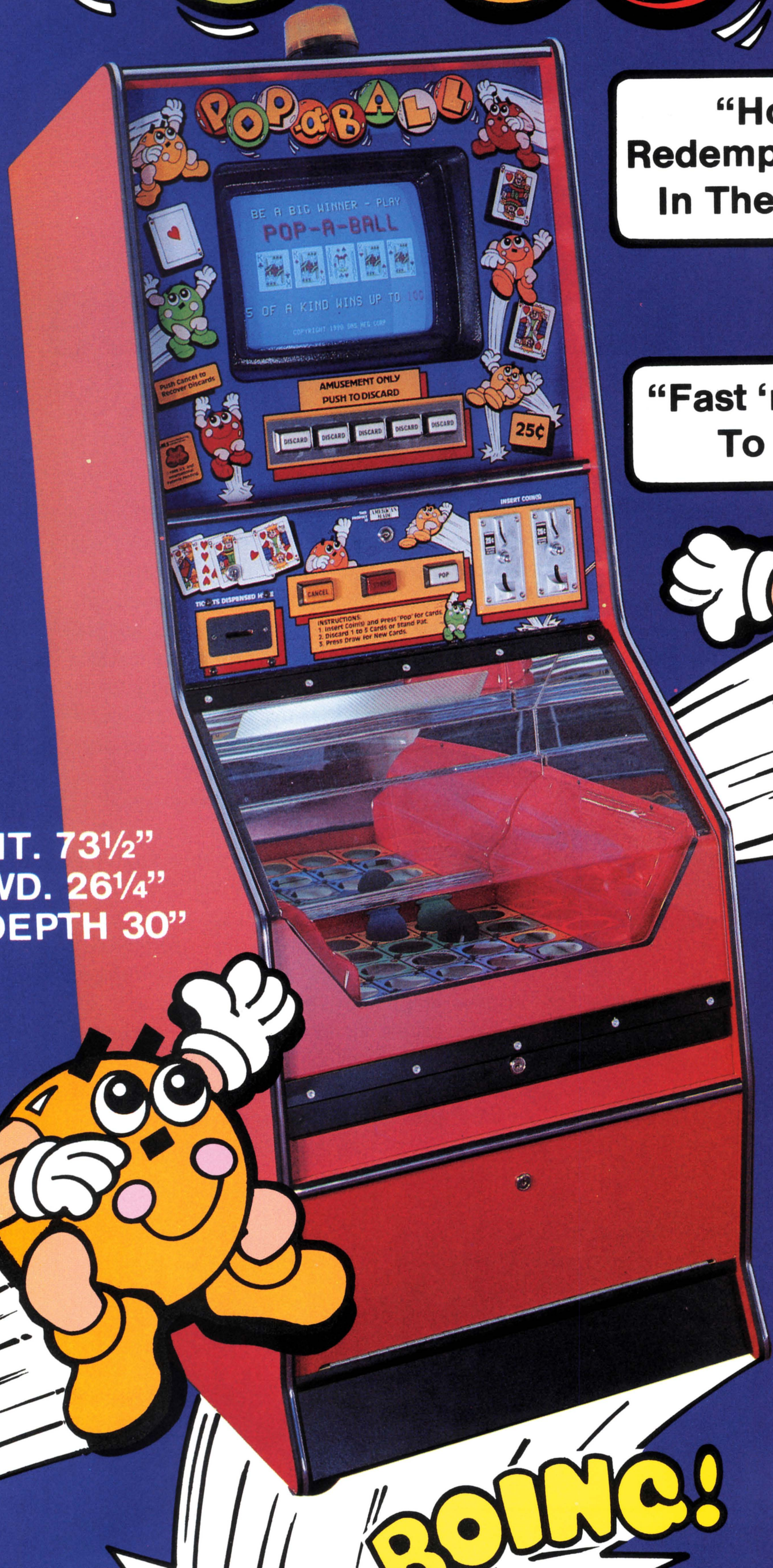
Thanks again to Carol, Bonnie, and Valerie for honoring me with the first Ralph C. Lally II Award. It's given to the "Operator of the Year" in honor of the founder of Play Meter magazine, who was killed in an automobile accident in 1984.

I always respected Ralph's publishing philosophy. When someone is strong enough and honest enough to point out not only the strengths, but the weaknesses of individuals and the industry as a whole, it encourages that kind of strength and honestly in all of us. Ralph was a daring pioneer.

I am truly grateful to be the recipient of an award which bears his name.

Jim Hayes
Gem Music and Vending
Dayton, Ohio

POP-a-BALL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UP FRONT

Professionalism required for survival in business

Do these sound like the comments of a coin-op professional? Regarding ancient equipment: ''I'd rather leave it at the location than the warehouse,'' or ''The game's never done much in the four years it's been there.''

A game that hasn't been rotated for years is obviously not going to stir up much interest. The location has probably written it off too. Let's put ourselves in the shoes of the location owner. How would we feel about the company supplying our games if we couldn't get any new equipment? How would we feel if a faceless collector routinely came in to empty the cash box, gave us our share, and disappeared into the night without so much as a word?

Location owners aren't telling us these things; other operators are! Operators are telling us they are being asked by unhappy locations to come in and bump the other guy. These operators don't want to step on a fellow operator's territory, but they can see that the service is not up to par. They are telling us that there is a need for more professionalism in this business. Operators are telling us that among their ranks are *some* who are not doing their jobs as best they can.

The industry can't afford to lose *any* locations, especially due to neglect. Once lost they are tough, if not impossible, to regain. Just try convincing someone with a bad game experience into letting you set his place. Once a location is gone, it's usually gone forever. Dissatisfied locations will find it easy to blame everything on the games. ''The kids make too much noise by the games,'' and other complaints. Soon a drink machine or snack vendor will take the place of the outdated equipment.

It takes only a few minutes of an operator's time to check with each location once or twice a week to be sure that the fresh games arrived and that there are no problems. With the exception of very few games, the location owner will not know a brand new game from one in tip-top shape that's a year old. What he wants is a fresh face, something different in good working order. Operators have even told of rotating jukeboxes so the location owners feel as if they are getting something new. It's a different look, stocked with quality music, and the location merrily hums along with an attractive jukebox that is *new to them* (the location and its customers).

Communication is essential. The location owner may be stunned by the attention, but rest assured, he will remember you and your company. It's one businessman to another doing a thorough job. Such service and rapport with location owners can only be beneficial. It limits the chance of another operator taking that location away from you, and your name may be passed on to a potential location in the future. Looking only for the quick buck at the ''A'' locations and forgetting the ''B'' and ''C'' locations is not a very farsighted approach. There will always be someone wanting your ''A'' locations.

Let's be honest. Perhaps you don't want or don't need some of the lesser locations. Why not do everyone a service and sell them to another operator who does want them? You make some money, he gets new locations, and the locations get the attention they need. Most importantly of all, the locations are maintained. Don't wait for locations to call a competitor and ask him to come in with fresh equipment, or perhaps rule out games there altogether. ☐

Bonnie Theard

Bonnie Theard
Managing Editor

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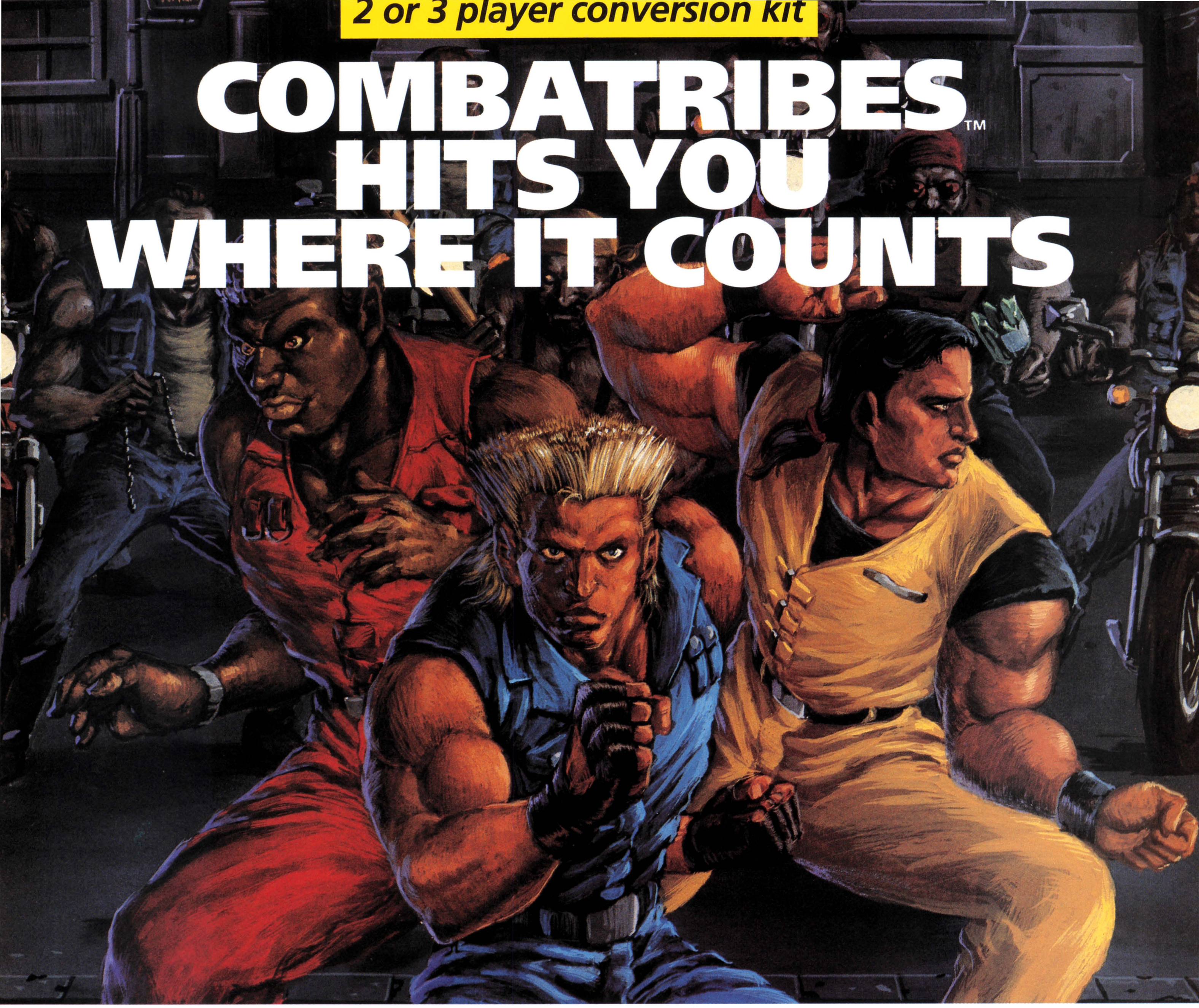

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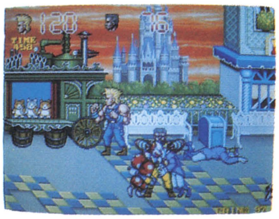
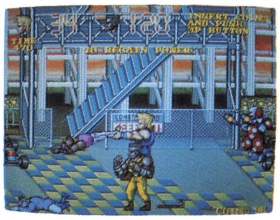
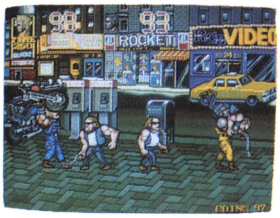


Double elbow headbash



Feet-swing a villian



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American Technos focuses on quality, not quantity

American Technos, the sales and marketing arm of Technos Japan, made a tremendous impact on the U.S. coin-op market even before its name was well-known. The company licensed *Double Dragon* to Taito; we don't need to remind you that it was a mega-hit. *Karate Champ*, another coin-op hit, was licensed to Data East.

Besides the licensed hits, American Technos has had two hits of its own—*Double Dragon II, the Revenge* and the current best seller, *WWF Superstars*. In its short three-year history in the United States, American Technos has become legendary for quality games.

The company just moved from its California offices to new expansive facilities in Beaverton, Ore. Although the initial R&D is done in Japan, the fine tuning is done in the United States. Six to eight engineers come over from Japan, visit locations, talk with players, and then finalize the game. American Technos eventually hopes to have its own team of research and development personnel in the United States.

American Technos has a philosophy of quality, not quantity, as evidenced by its introduction of two games per year. ''Being a small company, we must have good games. With only two games per year we don't have very much margin for error,'' explained vice president Aldo Donnaloia.

There isn't a company in the industry that wouldn't like to have the next game sensation. American Technos is no exception and has come up with a unique way to get new ideas. Aldo explains, ''An operator in Oregon named Dan Williams was testing our *WWF Superstars* in some 7-Eleven stores. Through he and Southland's JoDeen Ingraham, we came up with the idea of running a promotion for players.''

Called ''Create the Next Video Game Sensation!,'' the program invites anyone and everyone to send in their ideas. The grand prize winner (to be chosen in late summer) will be awarded an all-expense paid trip to Japan. Five second place entries will win American Technos arcade games and 20 third place prizes will be Technos-designed cartridges for the Nintendo Entertainment System.

Aldo said they have already received 70 entries. ''Who knows, one of these entries may be the next hit game!'' he said. ''We don't want to see just more of the same theme on games; asking players directly may produce a game that is different enough to be a hit.''

Aldo added, ''Street locations are so important to our industry. Without them there would be no industry. I'm not demeaning the arcades, but if we were just aiming for them we would be making big expensive machines. We want our games to be good in street and arcade locations. Because we are thinking of both markets, *Combat Tribes* was designed for the street as a two-player and for arcades as a three-player. It is operator adjustable.''

The president of the company is Keiichi Iwamoto, who opened the Data East office in the United States and initially served as its president. He has great faith in the industry, saying, ''The coin-op industry has made a solid impact on the world. We are glad to be a part of it. We are also very proud of the products we have brought to the market.''

Glen Kalhar is the newest face at American Technos, but is certainly not new to the industry. He is the director of sales and has over 18 years of experience in the distributing end. ''I know that my experience in distributing will greatly help me in working with our distributor network. It's certainly different being on this side of the fence, but I won't forget what it's like being on the other side,'' he vowed.

Greg Rice is national sales director in the consumer division. Greg began his industry career at Atari, where he spent three years. American Technos is a third party licensee for Nintendo. Its first game for the NES is *River City Ransom* and there are hopes to add *Block Out* later in the year.

Said Greg, ''There has been a lot of concern from operators about the home video industry. However, since I began in coin-op and am now in consumer, I can honestly say that the two complement each other if the manufacturers use discretion in introducing games to the home.''

With a lineup of top-notch individuals and a philosophy of quality, not quantity, it is certain that we will be seeing many new surprises from this manufacturer. ☐

Pictured, front (l-r): Mr. Tomiyama, Aldo Donnaloia; back (l-r): Richard VandenBrink, Glen Kalhar, and Shelly Brown.

Testing *''Combatribes''* (l-r): Mr. Nishimura, Mr. Saito, and Mr. Shibata.

THE COMBATRIBES

Mel McEwan retires

Back in 1973, Mel McEwan began a coin-op career that would take him from a sales position all the way up to manufacturer of a respected line of redemption/novelty games. Mel's company is Meltec, of course, maker of the reliable *Boom Ball, Knock Down, Big Mouth*, and the new *Lunar Golf*.

Mel has toiled in the coin-op amusement industry for 17 years. Now, he and his wife Albina are retiring to a quieter life. They will divide their time between their home in San Jose, Calif., and a cabin in Lake Tahoe.

Lots of golf is on the agenda for the McEwans, but they will hardly be sedentary. Mel is planning to complete more water color paintings in preparation for an upcoming one-man show. He will also maintain a semi-active hand in the business, now directed by sons John and Mike and daughter Natalie.

Mel's first coin-op job was at Ramtek Corp., where he became sales manager, then general manager of the game division. While at Ramtek, he helped develop the first solid-state pinball machine and also helped develop such video games as *Video Blackjack, Baseball, Trivia*, and others.

Mel purchased the *Boom Ball* product line in 1980 and started Meltec. He and his sons re-engineered the game and later added several other successful redemption pieces to their product line.

His philosophy has always been to produce long-term, quality products that are easily played by all ages. Service comes first with Mel, and his games are known to enjoy a long life on location.

Congratulations, Mel! The industry has benefited from your expertise. Enjoy your retirement. ☐

Albina and Mel McEwan have the right outlook on retirement.

The McEwan clan, (standing l-r): Mike, John, and Natalie, (seated) Albina and Mel.

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Louis Boasberg

The American Revolution of the '90s

Whether we want to or not, we are forced to respect and admire all the virtues and abilities of the Japanese: their technical skill, their dedication, their supreme success in electronics and other fields of endeavor, and their devotion to the work ethic. Above all, they are the ones who gave us such super games as *Pac-Man, Ms. Pac-Man, Space Invaders*, and so many others that led us into a video game prosperity of unbelievable proportions.

Ever since those early days the majority of our equipment has been of Japanese origin. So naturally these games, for the most part, reflect the thinking and attitudes of the Japanese and the Far East. Even though the games of the past few years have been most successful, if the video game market is to continue to be successful in the future, we have to have our games adopted to themes that we are familiar with, games that reflect the Western mind and attitudes, likes and dislikes. Martial arts and Samurai battle games have been satisfactory in the past, but perhaps a change of pace will benefit everyone concerned.

Therefore, as a suggestion and possible help to all manufacturers—foreign and domestic—and at the risk of repeating some names, themes, and subjects, I am going to offer a list of ideas that I think may be adopted into games which Americans and Europeans of all ages and both sexes can relate to and hopefully will enjoy playing.

> ***"Ever since those early days the majority of our equipment has been of Japanese origin."***

From literature I suggest the following books that could be adapted to game play: *Treasure Island, Robin Hood, Sherlock Holmes, The Three Musketeers, Dracula, Ben Hur, Frankenstein, Knights of the Round Table, Ivanhoe, Romeo and Juliet, King Arthur, War and Peace, Wizard of Oz, Land of Oz, Greek Mythology, Cinderella, Mother Goose, Grimms' Fairy Tales, Alice's Adventures in Wonderland,* and *2000 Leagues Under the Sea.*

Taking themes from history and geography, I suggest: The American Revolution, The French Revolution, The Civil War, World War I, World War II, The Roman Empire, Napoleon, Julius Caesar, The British Empire, Ancient Greece, Paris, London, New York City, Rome, Washington, D.C., Hollywood, Beverly Hills, Las Vegas, and Atlantic City.

Here's some sports suggestions: high school football and baseball, college baseball, tennis, mixed doubles, basketball's Final Four, cheerleaders, Yankee Stadium, and the locker room.

And to round out my suggestions, here are some business, finance, and miscellaneous recommendations: stocks and bonds, the stock market, Wall Street, international finance, the Big Board, foreign exchange, the movies, Broadway musicals, the Taj Mahal, supermarkets, department stores, city traffic and freeways, foreign intrigue, the Old Testament, and the New Testament.

The subjects and themes listed are only a partial list, but it should hold us for awhile. If all the designers and engineers would give it their best shot and adopt some of these themes into games, I believe that it would help the industry to overcome some of the intense competition that has threatened its prosperity during the past few years. ☐

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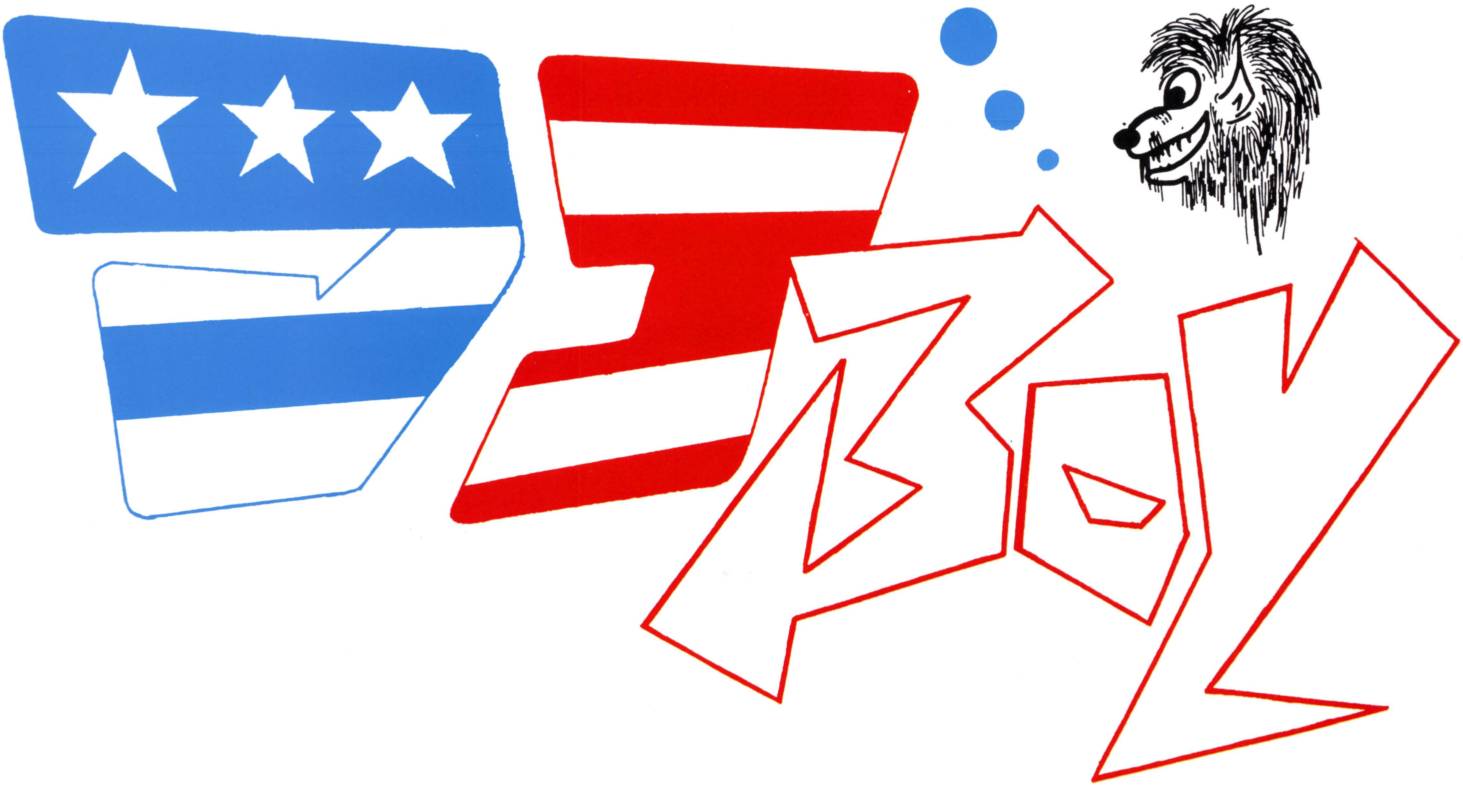

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Up on the Hill

The Amusement and Music Operators Association (AMOA) and the American Amusement Manufacturers Association (AAMA) co-sponsored the Government Affairs Conference in Washington, D.C., at the beginning of May.

Over 200 operators and their families, distributors, and manufacturers spent several days in the nation's capital on business and pleasure.

Although it was a jointly sponsored event, the operators and the manufacturers and distributors each had their own special interests to discuss with members of Congress.

While everyone focused primarily on the dollar coin, manufacturers continued to discuss the issue of parallel imports, while operators added cigarette vending to their list of priorities.

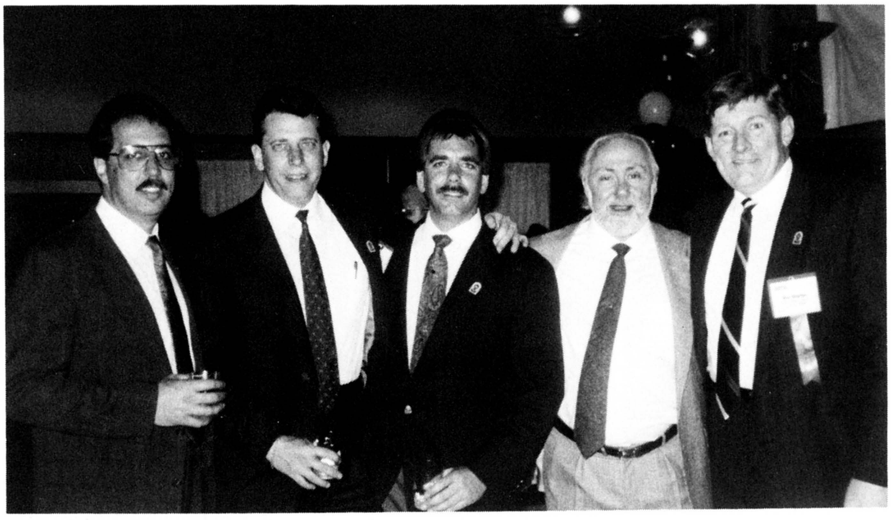
Operators agreed that it has been a difficult sell to convince members of the Senate and House of Representatives on the idea of a dollar coin. Most are all too familiar with the disastrous Susan B. Anthony coin that failed to win much favor with the public. Said one operator, "It's not just a matter of convincing them that a dollar coin would be favorable over a dollar bill. It's trying to help them forget that it's been tried before."

Added another operator, "We must stress what went wrong with the Susan B. and focus on the ways to make the Columbus dollar coin work."

Dollar coin

Operators were armed with a paper outlining the benefits of the dollar coin. These benefits include lifespan, vending

(L-r): Millie Arnold, Tom Riquier, Chuck Arnold, and Michael Riquier.



(L-r): Frank Gumma, Gil Pollock, Tony Yula, Ken Anderson, and Rus Strahan.

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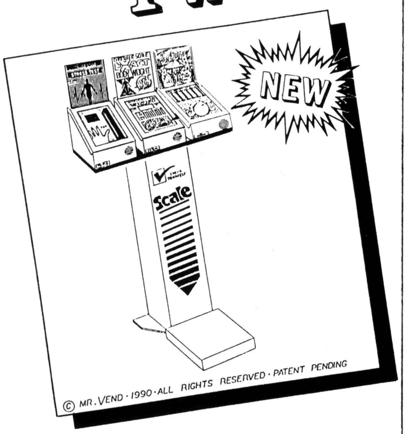
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machine savings, streamlining mass transit systems, and helping the visually handicapped.

* A dollar bill lasts just 18 months, on average, while a dollar coin would last over 20 years. This would save taxpayers over $120 million annually.

* Consumers would save money at vending machines. Bill changers cost $2,400 and retro-fitting machines with bill acceptors cost about $400 per machine—costs that machine operators must pass on to customers.

* Without a dollar coin, more mass transit systems will be forced to follow the examples of Cleveland, Washington, D.C., and Chicago, which recently spent $5 million, $8.7 million, and $15 million, respectively, to refit buses with new fare machines.

* The visually handicapped would be able to make small purchases with a distinctive one dollar coin without fear of accidentally spending a large bill or of being cheated when receiving change.

> *"Operators were armed with a paper outlining the benefits of the dollar coin."*

Along with the clear advantages of a dollar coin, the House bill also calls for phasing out the dollar bill three years after the new coin is introduced. Several Western countries—including England, Japan, Norway, Australia, and Canada—made studies of the United States experience with the Susan B. Anthony. Recognizing the problems of a paper-based currency system, they have removed or phased out the bill of the same denomination. The Canadian success in phasing out the dollar bill after introducing the dollar coin—nicknamed "The Loon"—is a clear success. Many operators, distributors, and manufacturers had a hefty supply of them to pass out to congressmen.

So far, the bill has 23 senators and 98 representatives who've signed on as co-sponsors.

Discrimination against cigarette vending

There have been efforts made to prohibit vending machine sales of cigarettes. AMOA opposes bills to accomplish the goal of outlawing cigarette vending machines, claiming it is discriminatory against a legitimate means of selling a lawful product.

Operators explained to their representatives that such a ban would harm the coin-op business without achieving the goal of the bill, which is to protect minors. They stressed that prohibitions against the sale of tobacco to minors should be enforced equally against all means of sale—whether over the counter or by machine.

Acknowledging that the goal is to protect minors, it was pointed out that 41 states already have laws establishing a minimum age for the purchase of cigarettes. The majority of cigarette vending machines are now in places where minors are not allowed or are monitored by adults.

There is no credible evidence that teenagers buy cigarettes from vending machines in any significant numbers. Over 91 percent of minors who smoke now get their cigarettes elsewhere.

Jukebox license agreement

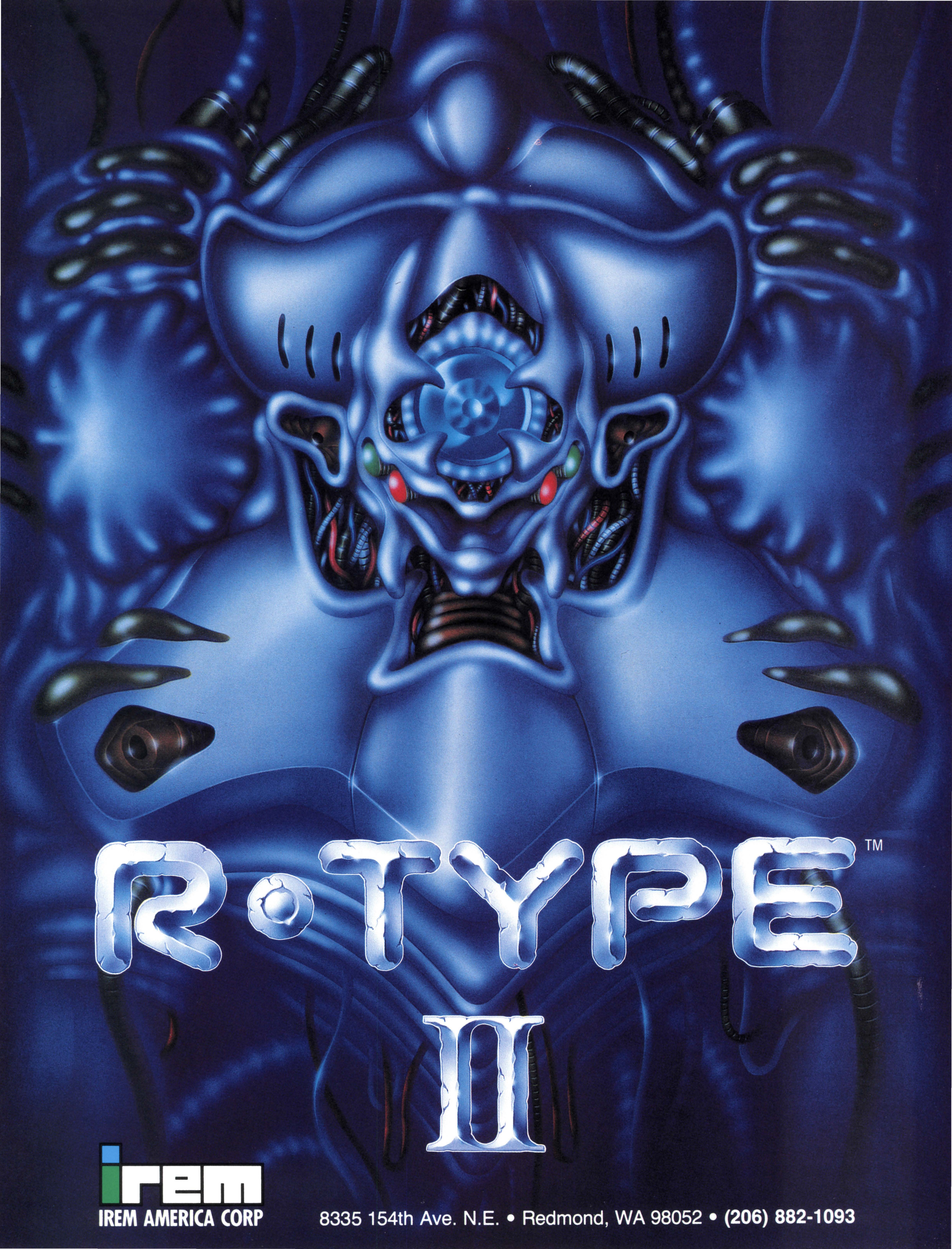
Although the jukebox licensing agreement has been signed, sealed, and delivered, operators expressed their appreciation to those in Congress who had a part in seeing it come to pass.

Parallel imports

The parallel import issue has affected the industry at all levels. Here's a brief history. The manufacturers maintained that they had the right to do as they wished with a game, while operators cried foul when a game was offered only in dedicated form.

Operators then found that they could buy a board brought in from Japan, thus having a game board from a dedicated game. They could then, at quite a savings, utilize that board in a used cabinet. Bill Beckham filed a lawsuit, hoping to get a clear decision on the legality of buying boards from Japan that were made for use in Japan. The decision went in favor of Beckham, but he lost on appeal. The Supreme Court refused to hear further arguments.

The manufacturers, in meetings with their representatives, asked for support in having parallel imports made illegal.



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Speakers

AMOA sponsored several meetings featuring elected officials. Three congressmen on the Budget Committee outlined what Americans can expect in the way of a balanced budget. First was Bill Frenzel of Minnesota. He also serves on the Ways and Means committee.

Frenzel pointed out that when looking for additional revenue to balance the budget, excise taxes always come to mind. Those on cigarettes could obviously affect the coin-op industry. He added that many times the government counts on small businesses to do some things traditionally left to government, such as health care and parental leave.

John Bryant of Texas, who also serves on the Energy and Commerce Committee, explained that the national deficit is over $200 billion. The budget crisis of the '80s has forced a change in some policies, he said, adding it didn't take a rocket scientist to figure out that if taxes go down and spending goes up, there will be a big deficit.

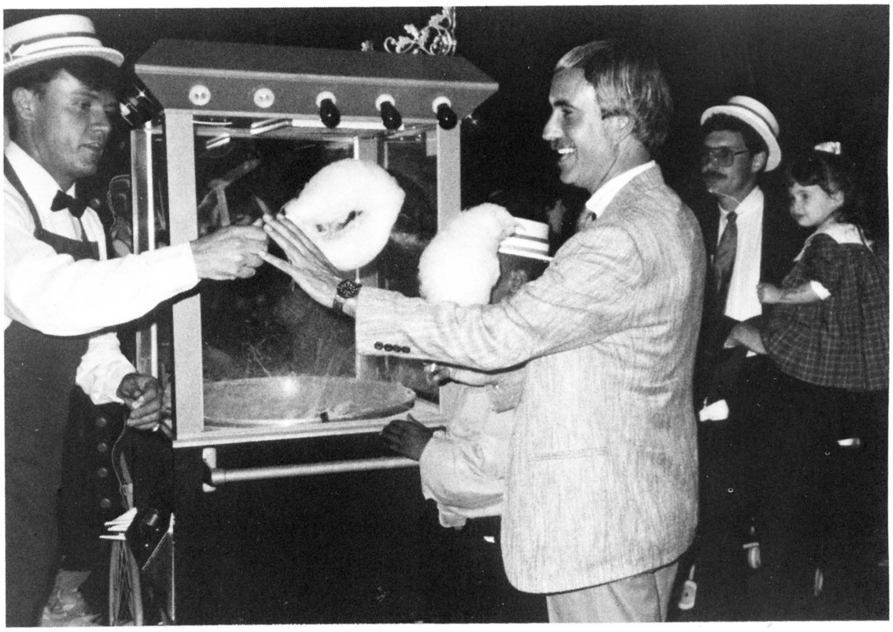
> ***"When looking for revenue to balance the budget, excise taxes always come to mind."***

Bryant talked about the foreign trade policies that he feels have been very unfair to Americans. "It's ironic that as the domestic deficit rises, so to does the trade deficit," he said, noting that government is sometimes more fair to foreign countries than our own.

The last member of the budget committee to address operators was Helen Bentley of Maryland. She told the group that it was amazing how many groups approach the budget committee with pleas to save them. "Everyone wants to see a balanced budget, but no one wants it to affect them," she said.

She was tough on foreign companies getting tax breaks. An example was Toyota opening a factory in Kentucky and getting a hefty $350 million tax break. "This is one reason we don't have a balanced budget," she said.

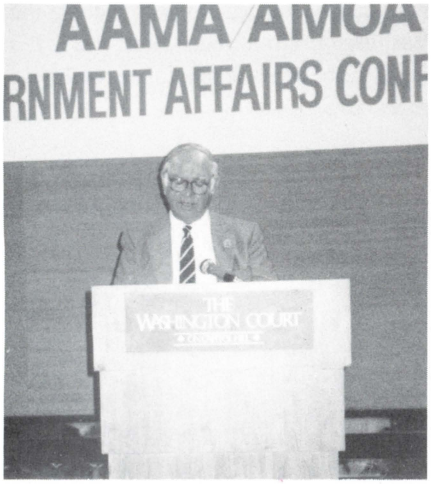
Operators got the chance to ask a few questions. Larrianne Simon asked about



Bill Beckham with one of his favorites, cotton candy.

A group of manufacturers and distributors, (l-r): Ken Anderson, Bill Kraft, Frank Gumma, Rus Strahan, Tom Petit, Frank Ballouz, Paul Weideraenders, Gil Pollock, Bill Cravens, Phil Wood, and Bob Fay.

Larrianne and Erwin Simon of Pride Enterprises.



Rep. Joe Moakley of Massachusetts addressed the group at a breakfast meeting.

Rep. Billy Tauzin of Louisiana with his wife Gail.

Data East's Gary Stern.

John Blouin of James Industries with his brother Bob.

Sneed High (l) with Paul Bell of BMI.

Valerie Cognevich is flanked by Louisiana Rep. Clyde Holloway (l) and his press secretary, Steve LeBlanc.

(L-r): Phil Benson, Ed Velasquez, and Rowe's Joel Friedman.

Nintendo's Chuck Arnold (l) with AMOA president Jack Kerner.

Gene Winstead with Mississippi Rep. Mike Parker.

line item vetoes; Hy Sandler expressed frustration over the government being reactive instead of proactive; Dick Hawkins asked about treasury bills; Sneed High asked about capital gains; Dock Ringo asked about the dollar coin; and Garland Garrett asked about the Social Security, highway, and aviation trust funds.

Rep. Joe Moakley of Massachusetts, a close friend of AMOA president Jack Kerner and a member of the Rules Committee, addressed the group at a Tuesday morning breakfast. A speaker who knows how to keep an audience's attention, Moakley told a few anecdotes about his friend Tip O'Neil. He drew a standing ovation upon declaring that he had signed up as a sponsor of the dollar coin legislation.

Carnival for Life and Congressional Reception

''Winners Don't Use Drugs'' was the theme of the Carnival for Life hosted by AAMA and AMOA. Everyone was treated to hot dogs, popcorn, cotton candy, and a live band. An awards program capped the evening. Receiving awards for their work with kids were Champ Cookies, Conner-Harris Youth Enterprise Mini-Mall, Hine Junior High School Scholarship Fund, Midtown Youth Academy, Urban Youth Investment Program, and Youth for Tomorrow. Kerner and AAMA president Gil Pollock told the audience that the coin-op industry is serious about drug prevention.

The Congressional Reception on Tuesday evening was a tremendous success. Each year more congressmen, senators, and their families join the industry for fun, food, and facts. The event drew at least four senators and over 40 congressmen, along with their staffs and families. AAMA's Bob Fay and AMOA's Dick Hawkins did an outstanding job of matching state representatives with those attending from each state.

Frank Seninsky did a commendable job running the pinball, basketball, and dart tournaments, which drew record crowds. The volunteers who helped make it a success deserve a huge ''thank you.''

This event is so vital in helping our lawmakers understand our industry's needs and concerns. It was nice to see operators, distributors, and manufacturers playing games with their representatives. Children also gathered in groups to challenge each other. It would be great to see industry folks from each state at the Washington Conference next year. It's one of the best public relations vehicles we have. ☐

Sharon Harris (l) with Mars Electronics' Kira Burdick.

From Minnesota, (l-r): Dick Hawkins, Tami Norberg-Paulsen, and Gene Winstead.

Judy, Jim, and Tim Hayes at the Carnival for Life.

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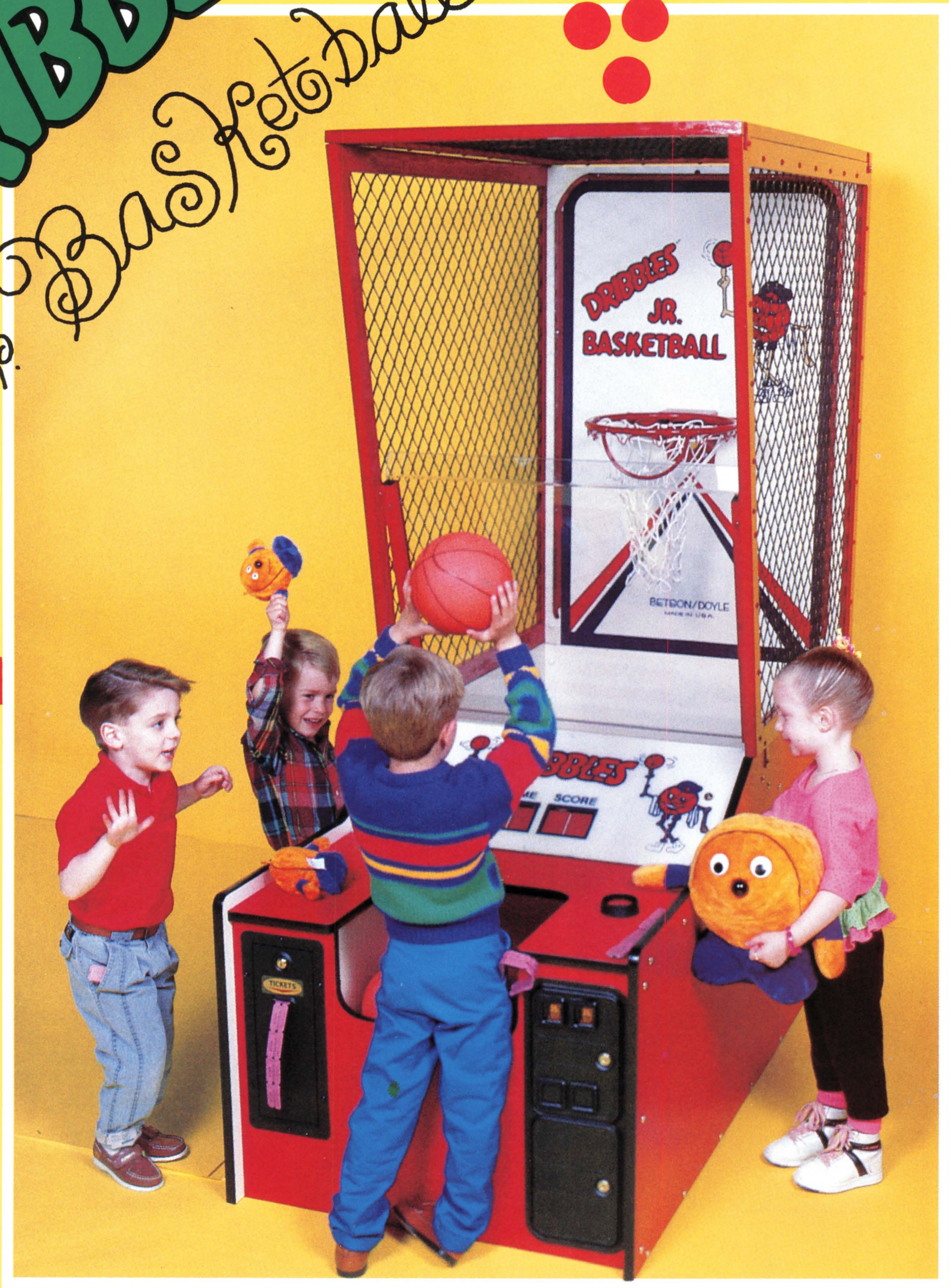
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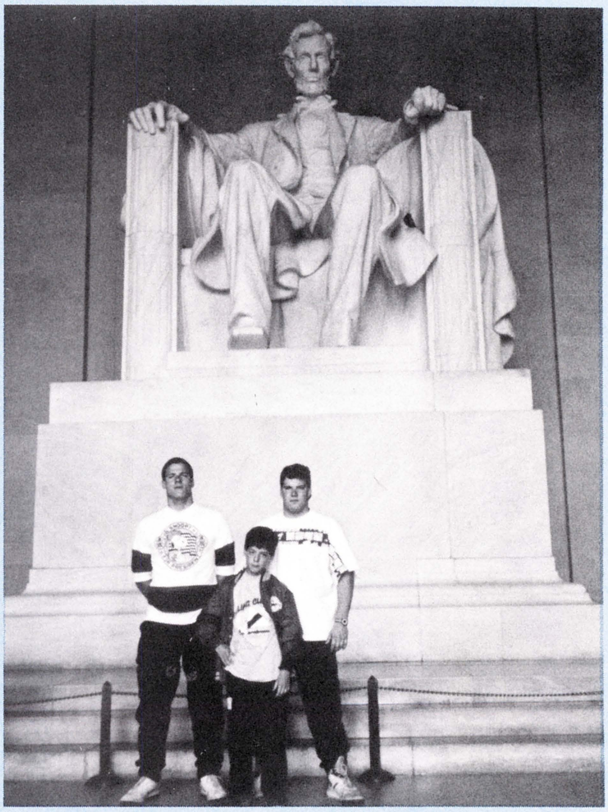
One operator who knows his vote counts

The Weigel family, (l-r): Fred, Russ, Sue, Bob, and Michael (front).



Bob, Russ, and Michael in front of the Lincoln Memorial on a sightseeing expedition.

We've covered the Washington Conference each year since its inception. We do a pretty good job of letting you know what happened, the issues that were covered, who was there, etc. Maybe you are a typical operator who isn't sure whether it would be worthwhile to attend. Fred Weigel, an operator from Wisconsin, felt that way. But this year he decided that he was going to join other operators, manufacturers, and distributors on the Hill. This is his story.

I'd like for you to meet Fred Weigel, his wife Sue and their three children, 16-year old twins Russ and Bob, and Michael, who is eight. Fred is an operator from Milwaukee, Wisc., who was visiting Washington, D.C., for the first time.

Fred has been an operator for five years since buying a 40-year-old route from Robert Puccio, who was retiring. He has also added several other routes to his business. When Fred got into the coin machine industry he began going to the national conventions and joined his state association. Why? ''I think it's very important to get involved. After all, if I plan to be a part of this industry, I need to know what's going on,'' he explained.

This philosophy brought Fred and Sue, who works at the company several days a week, to Washington, D.C., with their children, who sacrificed several days of school to attend. ''We decided that a trip to the Capitol was an educational experience. We agreed that the days the kids would miss from school would be worth it,'' said Sue.

The family got to the city on Saturday and spent that day and Sunday sightseeing. ''We never realized how much there is to see in this city!'' exclaimed Fred.

Early Monday morning there was an AMOA briefing in which three congressional members of the Budget Committee gave their views on what Americans can expect concerning the national budget. ''This was very interesting,'' noted Fred. The children sat through the speeches and reluctantly admitted that they were studying about the budget in school, so they too found it interesting."

On Monday night the family attended the Carnival for Life, sponsored by AAMA and AMOA. Operators, manufacturers, legislators, and other ''Say No To Drugs'' groups attended the event. ''It gave us a chance to let outsiders know that the coin-op industry is concerned about our nation's youth,'' observed Fred. ''Drugs are a major problem and all of us should be aware of what drugs can do to our country.''

Tuesday was filled with meetings on the Hill. Along with fellow Wisconsin operators Wally Bohrer and Jim Stansfield, Fred visited with Wisconsin Senators Herbert Kohl and Robert Kasten. Fred said of the meetings, ''I was flattered to be able to join Wally and Jim in meeting with those who really do have the say over what happens. Sen. Kohl has met with operators on several occasions about the dollar coin, but he never signed up to be a co-sponsor before. I think he will now.''

Fred visited with Rep. Jim Moody's assistant alone. They chatted about the dollar coin legislation. Fred said, ''Moody had indicated previously that he was going to join the dollar coin effort but hasn't done so yet. I'm fairly certain he will now.''

The Weigel family spent Tuesday evening at the Congressional Reception. They met and talked with Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner, while eight-year-old Michael showed Sensenbrenner's eight-year-old son the latest in coin-op games.

It was an eventful, worthwhile several days for Fred and his family. He said that he was impressed with the feeling of camaraderie he felt. ''I thought it would be hard for someone like me who doesn't really know a lot of other operators, but AMOA president Jack Kerner came up and introduced himself. We chatted about the industry for quite awhile. I got to know many people and realized that we all have so many things in common.''

Fred admits that at first he thought of going to Washington by himself just for the business. However, on reflection he realized that it is the perfect opportunity for business and pleasure. Fred's family is certainly glad he brought them along. And we're all glad that Fred decided to participate in the event. If you have any doubts about whether your presence is needed, just ask Fred and he'll say, ''Everyone must do his part to get what we need for our industry. Don't always think that the other guy will do it. Be that 'other guy' in Washington next year!'' ☐

Sue, Fred, and Bob ''clown'' around at the Carnival for Life.

With other Wisconsin operators Wally Bohrer (l) and Jim Stansfield (r), Fred meets with Sen. Herbert Kohl.

Fred and Jim Stansfield (l) discuss their meetings with Wisconsin representatives.

Fred and Sue with a few of their new friends, (l-r): Gary Stern (Data East), Jerry Derrick (Derrick Music Co.), Gil Pollock (president of Premier and AAMA), Sue and Fred, Sharon Harris (Stan Harris Amusement Co.), and Steve Koenigsberg (State Sales).

Valerie Cognevich

Bob Jones claims 53 years in the business, but he doesn't look much older than 53 years old. Like many youngsters during the war years, he had a hard time finding a job—any job.

And also like many in his generation, he fell in love with the coin-op industry and made it his life's work. Bob is still quite active in his own company, Arjay Export Co. in Hyannis, Mass. Bob is full of enthusiasm when talking about the industry—present and past. Here's his story.

Bob Jones

Bob, how did you end up in this crazy business?

I graduated from high school during a very depressed time—the mid-1930s. I worked several small jobs, like being a soda clerk in a drug store. One of my school friends told me about his brother, who was working for a company fixing jukeboxes. I always loved music, so I asked him how his brother had gotten in. Some of the guys had helpers who didn't get paid anything. However, they learned the work and usually got a job with the company. I jumped at the chance, working as an unpaid helper for about two months. Finally I got a job with the company, Sloane Berts. They operated about 3,000 jukeboxes in the Chicago area.

What was the job situation like back then?

There were no jobs. People were lucky to work at all. The coin machine industry was a growing new business. In those days people took their entertainment where they could find it. What better than a nickel in a jukebox while you were having a drink or a sandwich?

Jukeboxes came into vogue with the end of Prohibition, when many new locations opened. That was, of course, about three years earlier.

You were fixing and collecting jukeboxes. Do you remember some of the first ones you worked on?

They were probably Wurlitzers, because the company was heavily involved in them. They were rather simple machines. With just a few simple rules and some common sense, you could usually repair them. I remember working on the *Mills Ferris Wheel*, which was a very unusual piece. I also remember working on the Seeburgs; they had 10 records stacked with spacers. The tone arm would go up and down on the shaft, and the records would stop where they were supposed to. Then it would swing in and play the record. That was unique.

I can't forget the Wurlitzer *P-10* (a 10-record machine), the *P-12*, and the *616*. When I started in the business, the Wurlitzer 24-selection jukebox had just hit the streets. It was something really big and new. Then Seeburg had its 20-selection machine. Those were the two dominant companies. Rock-Ola was there on the fringe.

How long did you collect and fix jukeboxes?

In 1939 the company went bankrupt. They were taking the money out of the business and forgetting to pay their bills. Wurlitzer bought the company and sold a portion of it to Si Redd, who was operating Northwestern Music Co. in Sterling, Ill. He also had a company in Philadelphia, Miss., where he was a large operator in those days.

Did Si keep you on after he bought the company?

Yes. Si eventually transferred the route I was working to Sterling, so I moved there and became more of a technician than a route salesman. I learned to fix pinball machines. Like jukeboxes, they were relatively simple.

How did people back then go about getting trained to become technicians?

It was on-the-job training. Once you decided you wanted to be a technician, so-

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meone would show you what to do. But remember, the machines you were working on weren't very complicated like the ones today.

"What better than a nickel in a jukebox while you were having a drink or a sandwich?"

What kind of equipment made up the routes?

Remote wall boxes came out about that time. The jukeboxes were the backbone of coin-operated operations in those days. We had some pinballs. And most operators had one or two clubs that had slot machines, like the Mills blue fronts and Wattling roll-a-tops. They were at least tolerated; it was just another part of the business. Northwest Amusements had about six of them in the clubs. But primarily we had pinballs and jukeboxes.

Can you remember some of the older pinballs that you worked on?

I remember the Mills *Owl*. It was a funny machine. Gosh, I have never tried to bring those things to mind.

Were pinballs service nightmares?

They were rather straightforward. You just followed the little wire; there might be a schematic in there. It was mainly coils that would burn, but you could see them. They weren't that complex. In the beginning, the ball would hit a bumper and make a score. They didn't have flippers. That's where body english came in. Players would bump the machine to get the ball to bounce a certain way. Today's machines are a nightmare with all of the complicated things they do.

You were working for Si repairing machines. What happened next?

We were not a huge operation by today's standards. Si was beginning to get into selling some older equipment. I wouldn't say I was really interested, but I was aware of it. Si started doing business with a guy in Mexico. I had taken Spanish in school, and I seem to recall translating a letter or something. Anyway, I got involved in that in some small way.

Basically, I was just moving around enjoying the business. I worked wherever help was needed within the company. Si bought a business in Rockford, Ill., where I worked until I went into the service.

An interesting thing is some of the people I worked with in the early days. One was Lou Casola, who was associated with Si. I also worked with Les Montooth at Sloane Berts. These are people who were instrumental early on with AMOA.

What'd you do in the Army?

I began as the the supply sergeant for the reception center in Camp Grant, Ill. This was 1942. I stayed there something short of two years. When I was put in a replacement center, with the help of a few friends in the classification and assignment section, I got to choose where I would go. An officer I had gotten to know rather well from the Officers Club—where I was the slot machine repairman—was in Camp Miles Standish in Massachusetts. Si was in Massachusetts at the time, so that's where I maneuvered to go. I operated a route while I was in the Army.

How'd you manage that?

They knew I did that kind of work before, so I guess that's how I got into it.

Si had sold his business in Illinois and bought the Wurlitzer distributorship for New England. It was Redd Distributing Co. in Boston. While I was stationed in Massachusetts, I spent most of my weekends with Si and his family. When I was discharged, I went back to work for Si. He had been busy buying up jukebox routes. I took over one of the routes, operated it for a while, and finally gravitated toward selling.

How did you like sales?

I did a lot of traveling then. We opened a branch office in Springfield, Mass., around 1949. I ran that office until we finally consolidated. I moved to Boston, where I ultimately became sales manager for Si. We became very close friends. There was a low period in the industry, so Si decided he wanted to get out. He was offered a shot to go out to Nevada, which he took. Our competitor was Trimount Automatic Sales, which eventually became Rowe International. They offered me a job as a salesman.

But going back a bit, while I was still working for Si, I became more and more involved in the export business. We had to find outlets for our used jukeboxes, so we developed an export trade. That came under my jurisdiction.

Now back to when I was working with Trimount. Because of my export contacts, I did a little of their export work with Irwin Margold. One of Si's customers was from Japan, and he wanted to buy some slot machines. But he wanted special European machines that Si had no knowledge about. Si told him to call me. I was quite aware of the machine, an NSM wall slot machine. Before Si had closed up, he hired the former sales manager for NSM to be our representative in Europe. He was a good contact. I took a quick trip over to Europe and determined that I could get the machines in an adequate quantity to make it worthwhile.

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I told Mr. Margold that I was going to quit, and that was the beginning of Arjay Export Co. as it is today.

Didn't you also have a company called Robert Jones International at one time?

That's what my company was called when I first left Trimount in about 1970. Bally in those days was going through a period of reorganization while getting involved in pinball machines in a big way. They approached me about joining forces and putting together a big distributing company. We formed a new corporation, which is still called Robert Jones International. I was there until 1974.

Where did you go after you left Robert Jones International?

I didn't want to do anything that would harm the business I had left, so I decided to go into export work. When I first made the deal with the Japanese gentleman, the Japanese were primarily buyers. There were very few manufacturers of any type of quality product. They made funny little rides, games for kids, and pachinko, but that was it.

Are you surprised at the dominance of the Japanese in our industry?

No, I'm not. I remember very vividly a meeting I had with the head of Sega at an early JAMMA meeting in about 1974. I could see the beginnings of what they are today.

I had been dealing with the Japanese, so I felt like I was more aware of how influential they could become. I had seen a few of their games and the changes that had taken place.

Are there some times during your career that stand out in your mind?

The jukebox business was greatly affected when the *1015* came out. It was a fantastic machine, the dominant machine right after the war. Then Seeburg came out with the first 100-selection jukebox. When the 45s came out, it was a major change. It was so much easier to operate jukeboxes. There was no wear and tear on the 45s like there was on 78s, which were made of shellac. That was really a big problem with 78s. You should have seen how we scrounged during the war!

Jones (l) with John Smith, formerly of the Bank of Boston.

Why was there so much wear on 78s?

They were made of shellac and would turn white after a while. We were using metal needles, and many machines had heavy tone arms. A Wurlitzer tone arm weighed about four ounces. It would just dig into the record. After 60 plays or so that record was ruined. The records cost about 75 cents retail and 45 cents wholesale. A record played for two to three minutes. We used a lot of standards like "Stardust," "Does Your Heart Beat For Me?," "Bugle Call Rag," "Sugar Blues," and "Hot Lips." We would change records every week or two. On a 10-, 12-, or 24-record machine, we would change maybe two, three, or four records. Sometimes we would put a record in another location, hoping it would catch. Occasionally a record company would come out with a special record that had one side with a popular pop number and the other side with a song by another artist. When the pop song side wore out, we could turn it over.

What was the feeling when 45s were introduced?

Most people were very grateful for it. Some resisted because it required a major investment to convert the machines. But for the most part it was welcome. It would be similar to what's going on now with the CDs.

Although we converted some of the machines, the conversions didn't work out all that great. Compared to 78s, 45s practically never wore out. Also, after the war we saw lighter tone arms. Wurlitzer, for example, came out with the Cobra tone arm, which was a fantastic improvement. You could get a thousand plays out of a 78. And, of course, the other manufacturers soon had their own lightweight tone arms.

The 45s were so much easier to work with. They didn't break, which was a major problem with 78s.

When did you first become aware of 45s?

We used to have a lot of record stores in those days. They would handle 45s and the record companies would really promote them. Then Seeburg came out with the *100-B*, which was the first 45 rpm jukebox. Jukeboxes were very prevalent in those days. Today, you have to search harder to find jukeboxes in locations. Wurlitzer must have made 75,000 *1015*s. That was in a year-and-a-half.

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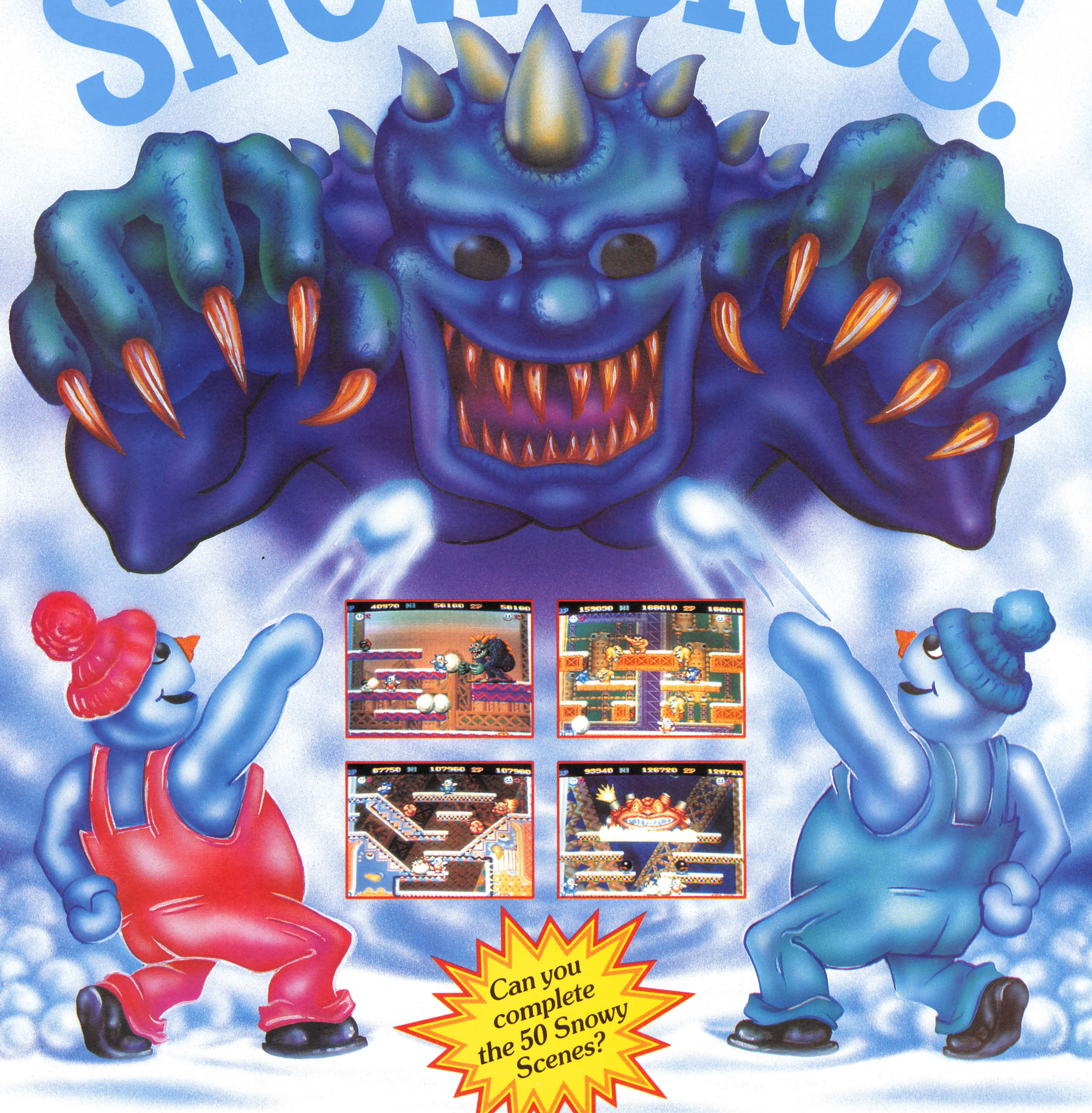
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Getting a Mantovani album autographed, circa 1955.

By 1950, all of the manufacturers had reduced their volume, because in the beginning they were just catching up with the war years. But I would imagine that in 1950, for example, there were 60,000 units produced. Today there are probably only about 15,000 in a year.

Do you know why jukeboxes were more prevalent?

TV wasn't that much of a factor. People lived in cities more than suburbs. People were only beginning to move out from the core of the city. When they lived in city apartments, there was nothing for them to do but go out in the evening and have a drink.

Today people live in suburbs. They have homes. The apartment situation is substantially different than it was, so people do more entertaining at home. In years gone by they would go to the local bar.

What are some things that you feel have had the biggest impact on the industry?

Undoubtedly, the biggest impact was video games. In the beginning they were crude, but they have always had tremendous appeal. Even though the first ones were very simple, it wasn't long before different things were tried. The Japanese came in and started making the more sophisticated games.

In the beginning it wasn't the Japanese. It was guys like Nolan Bushnell and others who produced games. When *Space Invaders* came out and everyone soon followed with their own version of it, the market became flooded. Ultimately, operators kept buying and buying and got into some deep trouble. But now it has straightened up. Operators are buying again, the equipment is holding up, and the machines are making good money. There isn't the same volume as before, but it's still good.

Are there any other things that were big in the industry?

Pinballs were kind of foundering around after the war until Gottlieb came out with its famous *Humpty Dumpty*, which was the first game with flippers. Manufacturers began modifying their old games by putting flippers on them. But the modified games simply didn't do the job that the factory-fresh ideas could.

Did *Humpty Dumpty* cost a lot more than others?

Not really. A pinball machines cost about $75 before the war. After the war, when *Humpty Dumpty* came out, they cost about $150 each. They were still nickel play. We used to play little tricks. For example, if the player was supposed to get a free play at 100,000 points, we would set the machine so that at 95,000 he would get a free play. The theory was the player would think the machine was broken and that he was cheating it a little bit. It really worked!

What do you remember about raising the price from five cents to 10 cents?

When the multi-player games came out in the early '60s the prices started going up. A four-player game probably cost about $500. Operators started thinking then about raising the price to 10-cent play. It took quite a long time. It was difficult to convince some people in our industry that they wouldn't lose much play because they were giving three plays for a quarter, one play for 10 cents. It really meant that they were getting quarters. The machines didn't earn less; they earned more once they were converted.

But there were some operators who were frightened that they would lose play. It's the same thing as now. What the hell is a dollar worth? Kids are walking around with change for a $20 bill. Years ago, kids would have a quarter and consider that a lot of money. But 10-cent play finally became the norm. Then trying to go to 25-cent play was next.

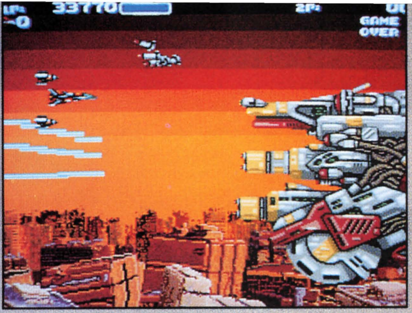
I think operators finally realized that they couldn't survive and had to increase their prices. There was inflation; salaries were higher. It wasn't that hard to accomplish once they set their minds to it.

Was there a lot of competition back then?

I think there was more competition back then in every respect. The guy with the best equipment would always win the location. The location loan has been a factor for as long as I can remember. If he had a good location, the operator would lend money to wrap him up in a contract.

The locations have always had the best end of the deal.

As far as commission splits, as equipment prices rose, we would go in and convince the locations that if they gave the operator a better deal, they would frequently come out with more money. The operator, then, could afford to put in better equipment and change records more frequently. But if the location owner demanded all of the profits, there was namco/KANEKO



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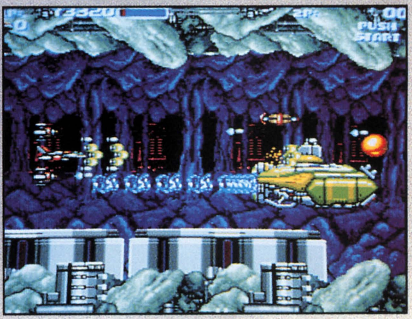

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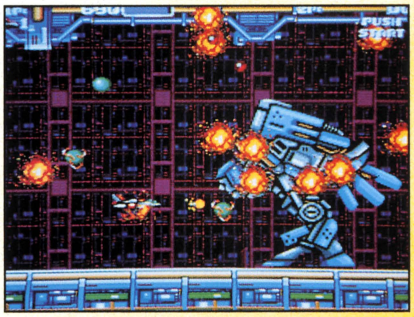

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nothing left for the operator. He couldn't afford to give the location the better equipment and the better service.

Is there anything else you'd like to talk about?

The last phase of my career has been with *Quarter Horse*. I'm essentially in manufacturing. I've learned a lot more about what the major manufacturers are putting up with. My association with Dale Rodesch, who developed the laser disc *Quarter Horse* machine, has been an interesting period in my life.

We have run into a problem that all manufacturers have run into—counterfeiting. That is a major, very costly problem. Let's say an operator decides to buy this PC board or disc to save $50 or $100. What they don't understand is that they are defrauding the man who spent many weeks, months, or years to create a game. It's just as though they took a gun to his head and said, ''Give me your money.''

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Was copying a major problem in the early years?

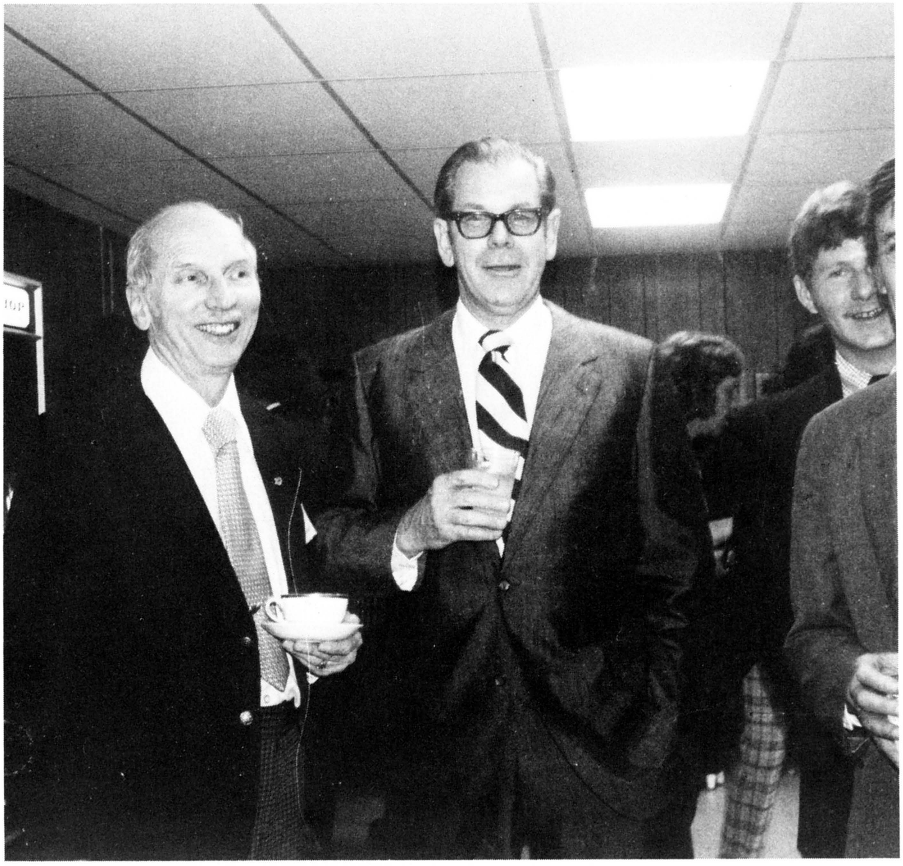
No. To make a copy of an electromechanical device was an expensive proposition. You had to have big machinery, a big plant. But today they make copies of the boards so easily. For example, a video laser disc, which is the heart of our machine, is not an expensive unit. The expense comes in the developing. The concept of the game took years before it came out in its current popular version. Dale has been working on another game for over a year. People that copy the games say, ''What right does Dale have to copyright that thing? He just stuck a few races together.''

''Pinballs back then didn't have flippers. That's where body english came in.''

Dale has been defrauded out of millions of dollars that he rightfully should have had. All of the manufacturers are being ripped off. This deprives the industry of what it really needs—money and ingenuity to produce new games, which are going to put more dollars into the operators' pockets. It's really false economy when they buy a counterfeit product. They are depriving themselves of something in the future.

I have just one more question. Where did you meet your wife Ruth?

I was divorced. A Masonic Lodge buddy said he had a friend who was visiting. She had lost her husband in the Korean War, so he wanted to fix us up. We went out and continued to see each other for quite awhile. However, it wasn't meant to be, so we separated. When she married another fellow a short time later, she invited me to the wedding. Ruth was her matron of honor and was single. Of course, since both of us were single, we got together. She let me catch her. We've been together for 34 years now. ☐



Les Reick of Rock-Ola (l) with Jones at a Robert Jones International open house in 1971.

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TEN YEARS AGO

Seems like old times

The front of the issue plainly said *June 1980*, but much of the content of Play Meter's 10-year old magazine could have been written today. Ralph Lally said in his editorial 10 years ago, "Unless operators act now and do something about the current economic crisis, the recession of 1980 will surely take its toll on this industry. Never before has there been such a need to re-evaluate present commission arrangements and pricing policies. Gone are the days when a new machine would pay for itself in a couple of weeks. What's not gone, however, and what should have been gone a long time ago is the 50/50 commission arrangement."

In the same issue, an operator wrote in a letter to the editor, "During the last number of years our industry has made tremendous strides in the manufacturing of video and pinball games. Along with the new games, the prices are continuously rising. The most important detail has been completely forgotten—namely the pricing structure. Why can't the manufacturers make a multiple coin drop, so we can gradually increase pricing..."

An article ("Arcade: 1990") forecasting the effect of computers on our business began, " 'Start the computer!' This is the first daily instruction in opening your arcade in 1990. And, as we will see, your entire business operations will depend on the reliability of that box in the back room."

Play Meter reported the following news stories in June 1980: AMOA decided to freeze prices for exhibitors and registrants for the upcoming AMOA in order to do its part to curb inflation; the jukebox licensing case continued before the copyright panel; Dennis Hilligan of Pioneer Service Co. resigned from his post as president, claiming increased business responsibilities; the industry lost Irving Holzman and Leo Caproni; Mel McEwan purchased the games division product line of Ramtek and formed Meltec to market *Boom Ball* and other games; and Atari's *Lunar Lander* was the first video game ever to be placed in the Kennedy Space Center's visitor lounge.

The top tunes listed in Play Meter's "Hot Stuff" were "Lost in Love," "Call Me," "You May Be Right," "Ride Like the Wind," "Sexy Eyes," "Don't Fall in Love With a Dreamer," "With You I'm Born Again," "Biggest Part of Me," "Pilot of the Airwaves," and "Fire Lake."

Roger Sharpe, in his "Critic's Corner" column, featured three pinballs that he called "heavyweights." They were Bally's *Space Invaders*, Williams' *Firepower*, and Stern's *Ali*.

Games listed in Play Meter's "New Products" section included: *Fanky Malloon* from Vending International, *Monte Carlo* from Atari, *Asteroids* cocktail game from Atari, *Ali* pinball from Stern, Sega's *Monaco GP*, *Cosmic Alien* from Universal, and Bally's pinball, *The Rolling Stones*. ☐

Williams

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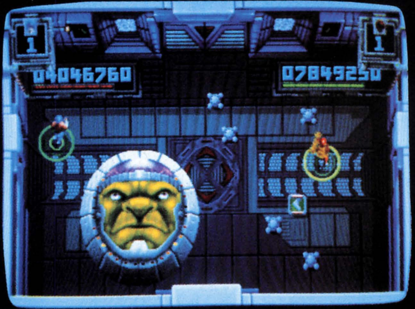

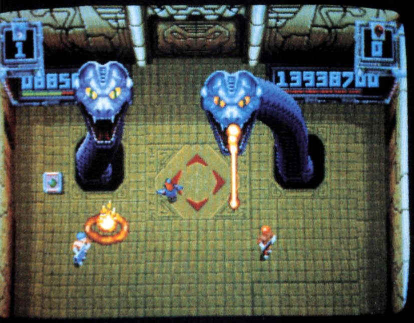

Only **SMASH TV** delivers such a sensational storyline and the type of innovative technology today's players are looking for. In fact, **SMASH TV** has more of everything! There's more enemies on-screen at a single time, more firepower, a full 32-bit hardware system, greater sound fidelity, more speech than ever before in a video game and built-in averaging for more customized levels of play and improved, long-term earnings strength. Diagnostically, **SMASH TV** is a cut above with in-depth, easy-to-utilize bookkeeping functions and more operator adjustable settings than ever before, including violence controls depending upon location needs.

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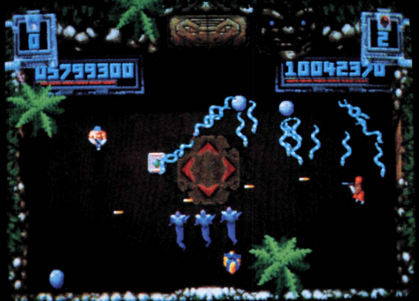

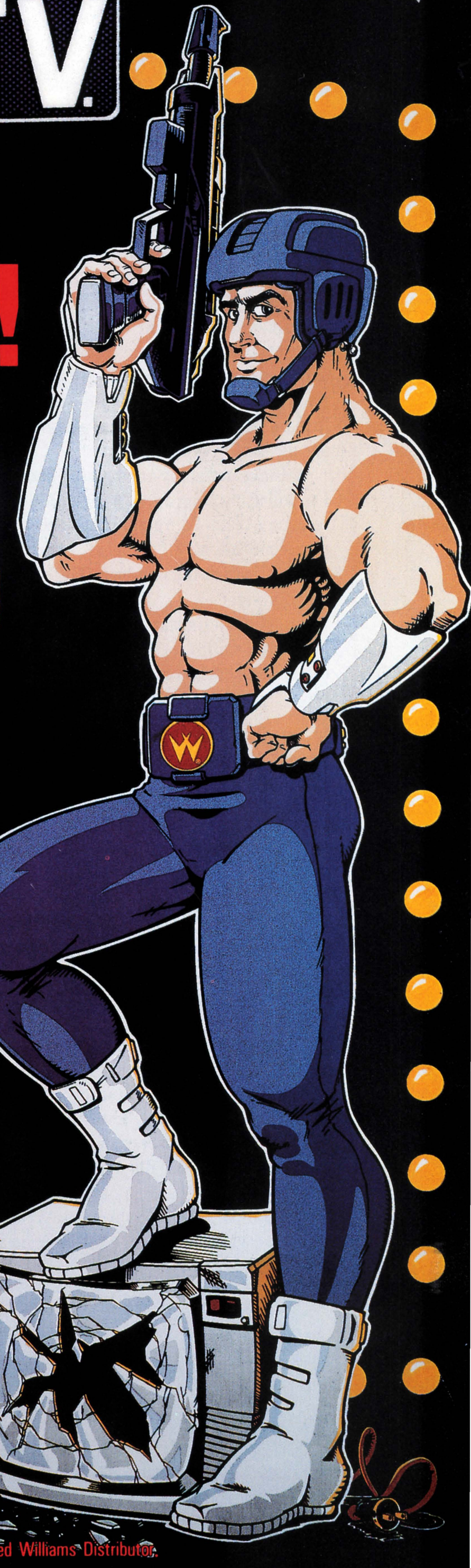

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Question: *What are your feelings on the pinball industry today?*

A

Larrianne Simon
Pride Enterprises
Huntsville, Ala.

I have just gotten a *Whirlwind* and I'm excited about pinball. I have to say that the number one reason I'm excited about them is they can't be duplicated for the home!

Secondly, we are seeing some innovative and creative pins come out. I feel that as we progress this year with promoting the anniversary of pinballs with tournaments and the like, we will have new opportunities with locations that are looking for us to revive them. Pinballs are the way to do that.

We have had some good pins. For example, I'm still using *High Speed* and *PinBot*. The difference is that we are getting into a new generation of pinball. New playfield features and new innovations are outstanding. The players are responding.

I think it's important, too, that the new pinballs are much easier to maintain. The manufacturers have come a long way in that area.

A

Bonnie Bruner
RayVend Amusement Serv.
Beltsville, Md.

Our company is putting very little emphasis on pinballs right now. We have just a handful of locations with video games and pinballs. We are also using less videos. We still have a few locations that want pinball machines, but we don't have many of the newer pinballs. We have some of the older ones like *High Speed* and *Party Animal*. Although the locations would like some of the newer pins, they are happy with the older ones. We just don't feel that investing in pinballs would be in our best interest.

Our company is mostly full-line vending. It is this area that we are concentrating on at the present time.

A

Richard Holley
Southeast Game Brokers
Tampa, Fla.

We are very cautious in pinball buying, more so than with anything else. Why? Essentially you can end up swapping dollars. If a pinball is a good earner but a good breaker-downer, what have you accomplished? You may be earning more but you're spending more to keep them up. Not to mention that they depreciate and can't be converted. Let's face it: all pinball machines break down because of the mechanical parts.

The secret is to go not with the most popular, but with the one that doesn't break down as often. We are biased toward Williams. Now that Bally is part of Williams we are taking a chance. So far so good; we're on our second Bally game. But it's not to say that even Williams games are perfect. No matter what it makes, if we notice a recurrent problem, it's out the door.

Every now and then I'll study the service log for any particular weekend. Weekend service is expensive. I'll see that even though a minuscule percentage of our operation is pinball machines, they are the highest percentage of service calls. We may have a hundred more videos than pins, yet we'll get a hundred more pinball calls.

You have to expect more breaks with pinball. But if you have to go three times a week to service a game that is making $125—and it's depreciating fast—you are merely swapping dollars.

The newer pinballs are a little better, but we don't hesitate to send them back if we have problems. Data East has come a long way, and if they continue to improve we will keep buying them. They are not service-free, but they are easier maintenance than in the past. I'm even sending back some Williams games because I'm disgusted with the problems.

Although Data East is promoting the flipper coil, there are other coils they forgot to tell you about. There are many that go out with constant use. There are also things that fall off.

There is a different market for pinball. You can't just replace a pinball with a video in some locations. If I didn't have to put out pinballs I wouldn't. We have been pricing them at one for 50 cents, two for 75 cents, and three for $1. But all machines in one location must be set the same. We don't run any old ones. Anything from *Taxi* on up is 50 cents.

Sometimes operators are die-hards. They count the money but don't keep accurate records to see the return on investment. Pinballs are not good investments or good return on investments if there are too many service calls.

A

Evan Brown
B & B Amusements
Cleveland, Ohio

I'm not over-enthusiastic about pinball. We probably have less than five percent of our locations that are productive with pinball machines. Unfortunately, about 35 percent of our locations have them. We have been trying to curtail purchasing pinballs. This is just the last three years, and I probably couldn't even tell you why. I don't waste my time trying to figure out why; I spend my time on doing what works. And pinball is not something that works.

The service on pinballs is awful. I can't move them from one location to another without bringing them back to the shop and spending six hours overhauling them. What I'm really livid about is that the manufacturers put ramps on their games that break after just a few months.

Then they tell us that they have a "modified" ramp that will work better. We then pay $75 to $100 for the new, improved ramp. We could go broke replacing them. They tell us that they have modified it so it will work. But then they have the same ones that don't work on their next pinball machine. It really burns me up.

They have made enough ramps to know what works and what doesn't work. But they still sell us games with ramps that they know will have to be replaced.

Maintenance is still give and take, even in the newer pinballs. Even if it has improved, it's still a big job.

I would hate to see pinballs cease to exist. But I'd like to see some new approach. Why couldn't they give us conversions? We could replace the backglass and playfield. It doesn't seem unreasonable.

The prices of games have gone up so much, conversions might help our return on investment and save on service. You could send a serviceman with the backglass and playfield. You wouldn't have to send two guys in a truck to move the entire machine. □

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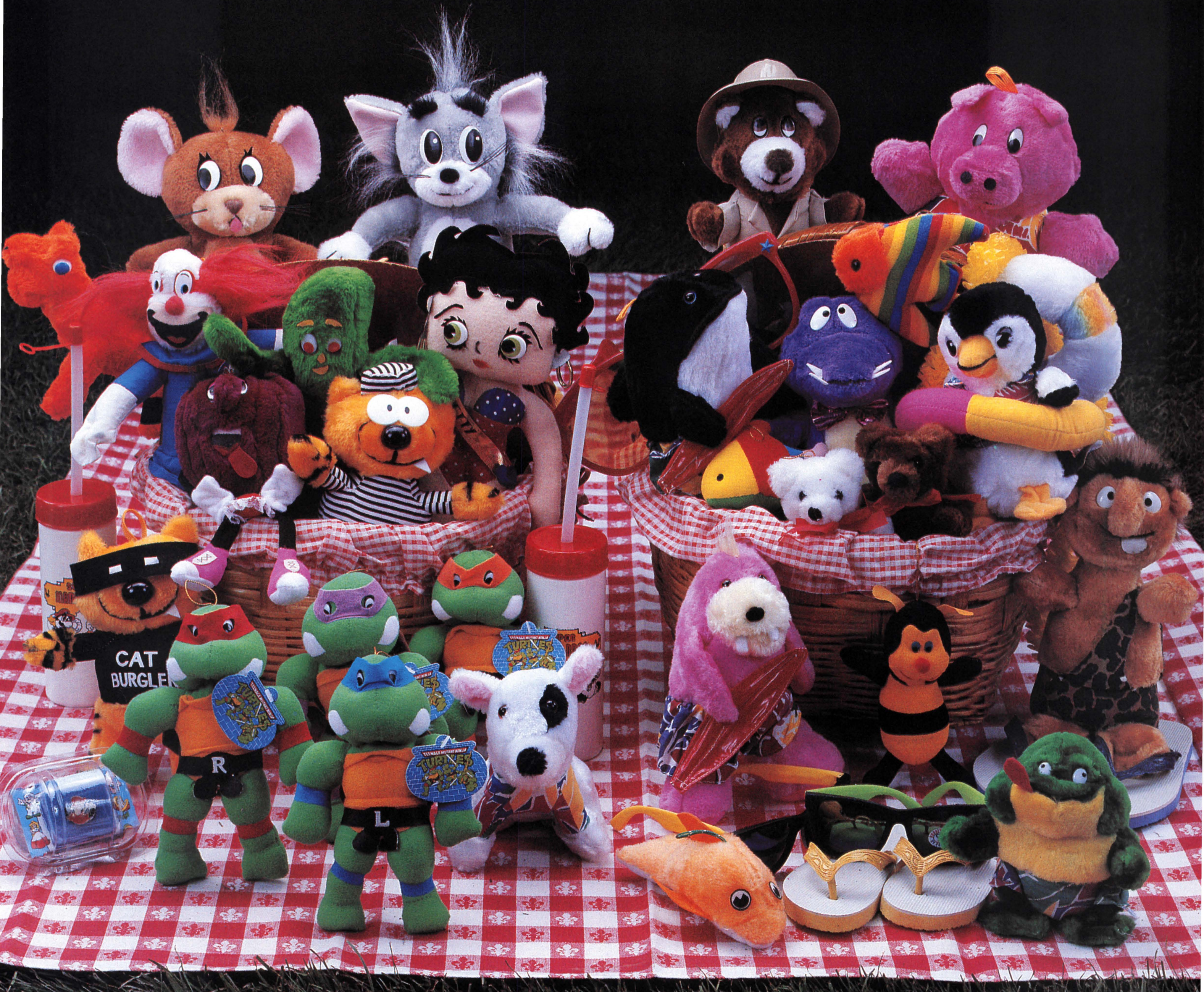

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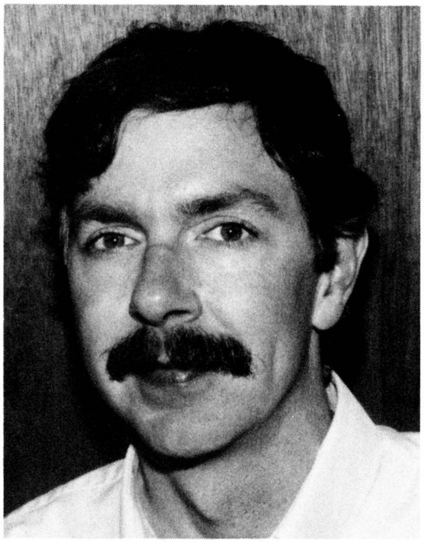
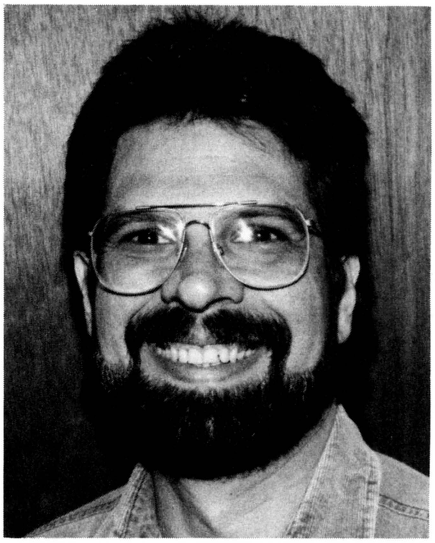
ACE ACE NOVELTY

Christopher Caire

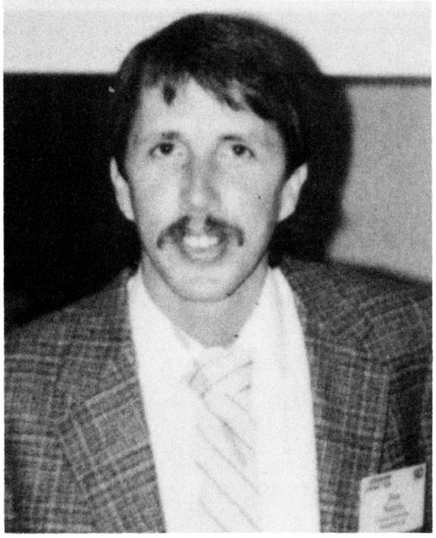
Near right:
Pat Lawlor
Williams

Far right:
Dennis Nordman
Bally/Midway





Pinball designers: the faces behind the games



Near right:
Joe Kaminkow
Data East Pinball

Far right:
Jon Norris
Premier/Gottlieb

They're what screenwriters are to motion pictures, architects to multistoried buildings, coaches to well-executed plays. Though they revel, for the most part, in anonymity, their contributions to the silver-balled American icon we know as pinball cannot be taken for granted. After all, without first having the pinball designers and their unique vision, players would not be able to experience flipper-happy fits of joy.

Of the four U.S. pinball manufacturers, Williams and Midway Manufacturing (makers of the Bally pinball product line) are the only ones with a policy of identifying the designer on the game itself. Hence, a given pin might be termed a "Steve Ritchie game," a "Pat Lawlor game," and so on. Williams marketing director Roger Sharpe says this is advantageous for operators, because if they've had success with a game designed by Mark Ritchie, for example, future games designed by him will likely have the same characteristics or style.

This, of course, has a flip side. If a designer's game doesn't do well, his subsequent games might carry an unfavorable bias without so much as the slightest consideration. Therefore, say designers at Premier and Data East Pinball, it's best to simply have the company name affiliated with a game, not the individual designer.

We discussed this and other topics with designers from each company: Pat Lawlor of Williams, Dennis Nordman of Midway Manufacturing, Joe Kaminkow of Data East Pinball, and Jon Norris of Premier/Gottlieb. These manufacturers obviously have more designers than the ones interviewed for this story. We chose to use these four as a representative sampling.

Also, all of the game designers interviewed made it clear that just as their efforts often go unnoticed, so too does the work of their colleagues who make the pinball machine come to life: software designers, mechanical designers, programmers, artists, and sound/music technicians. Again, without the input of these talented people and their staffs, there would be diminution.

Pat Lawlor

Lawlor has designed such Williams pinball hits as *Banzai Run*, *Earthshaker*, and *Whirlwind*. Where do the ideas for these and other pins come from? How does he get the inspiration for a design idea?

"The game themes are simply drawn from what's going on in the world around me," Lawlor said. "I try to determine a theme that could be dealt with in a manner that's fun to the player. I like to start with a theme, then build a game around it, if possible."

When Lawlor is struck with inspiration for a game, he jots it down in his "Book of Ideas," so to speak. If Lawlor doesn't have any themes in his head when it comes time to start another project, he goes to the book to pull out ideas from a few years back.

"It really comes down to what gets me excited at that point in time," he said. "You have to be so immersed in the project to be able to pull it off. I can think of three things right now that would be fun, but which one of them would I *really* get into doing right now? That's important, because this attitude carries over to the entire game team. The contagious feeling rubs off on them, making them enthusiastic about what they have to do."

The game designer, Lawlor says, usually does the theme and the playfield. At Williams, the designer is designated "team leader," the person responsible for transforming the pin from a drawing to production.

"But it isn't just one individual who's responsible for what you see," Lawlor said. "It's a lot like the movies. You see Robert Redford as the star, along with the co-stars' names, the special effects person's name, the director's name, and so on. It doesn't mean, however, that these people did the movie alone. There are countless people behind the scenes who aren't recognized by the public, but without them the movie wouldn't get made. I like to use this simile a lot to describe what we do here. We build entertainment."

The typical turnaround time for getting a concept up and running, says Roger Sharpe, is seven months to a year. In the case of Williams, with such a large team, determining who is going to work on a project is done by pecking order, or whose turn it is. The designer who headed the last release would "go to the back of the line," where he then begins laying the groundwork for another project in future months.

"I can't say enough how lucky the game designers at Williams are," Lawlor said. "The management lets us do what we do. I come in and say, 'This is what I want my next game to be.' We're pretty much left alone, though management sometimes must come in and tell us that what we want would be too expensive, or something like that. But overall, once you demonstrate that you're capable of pulling-off a project, they leave your creativity alone. I can't think of many other companies where this kind of trust is exhibited."

"It's the day all of our pinball games start to look alike that we're in trouble."

While it would be impossible not to take note of what other designers are doing, or have done, in a mechanical sense, Lawlor says he tries not to be influenced from a creative standpoint.

"I'm 38 years old now, and I remember devices on older pinballs that today's younger players haven't seen before," he said. "Certainly what I do is influenced by what goes on mechanically. In other words, we're constantly making mechanical improvements to games: audio, sound, art, etc. If you want to stay on top of your game, you must stay on top of the mechanics of it. As far as taking concepts from other people, I've been lucky in that I'm a strange person. I always try to make right-hand turns with concepts. I don't have a problem coming up with my own ideas.

"By the same token, the essential goal of what we do is to make money for the operator, not please ourselves. If somebody is doing something that's making money for an operator, we'd better know about it. This is our business. It would be highly unprofessional if I didn't keep up with what everybody else is doing in pinball."

Though technological advances are arming designers with more gadgets and devices for their games, might it ever get to the point where the player says, 'Stop! After all, this is still just a pinball machine. I don't want all of these nifty little features.' Is there a danger of too much complexity, which would drive the average player away?

"Games can be too complex. It's intimidating when you don't know what to do."

"I've heard this from a lot of people, but I don't think future development means complexity," Sharpe said. "It means reappraising what we have with the existing space on a pinball machine, and how to use that space in a better fashion because technology has allowed you to do things that haven't been done before. To think that everything is getting more complex is wrong; *Silver Slugger* (Premier) and *Pool Sharks* (Midway Mfg.) prove you can go back to basics and still have an entertaining, successful package."

Game programmer Larry DeMar agrees with Sharpe, saying, "We're in the entertainment business. Our goal is to provide games that are entertaining. Right now, we're in a cycle where we're using ramps, gadgets, lights, and all kinds of other mechanical devices as part of that entertainment. It's become popular, which has allowed us to expand our player base tremendously. As technology gives us more ways to provide entertainment, we're going to be right there using it."

One of Williams' strong points, Lawlor says, is that it provides different pins for the different level of player. Someone who finds one game too daunting need not wait too long for another that suits his skills.

"We try to be a full-line game company," he said. "There is an entire spectrum of players out there, not just 'good' players and 'bad' players. They start out bad and go all the way up to incredible. Our goal is for the pinball line, in a given year, to cover that spectrum. One game may not cover it, but throughout the line, different designers approach their players differently. An operator can buy a game from us sometime during the year that's designed for a location's players, be they bad to average or absolute killers.

"I don't think anybody is ignoring the fact that games need to be understandable. Sometimes, as a business, we aren't necessarily good at making them understandable, even though we try hard at it. At times, it gets away from us. Good games are understandable when you walk up to them and look at them. You shouldn't have to spend $10 to figure out what's going on."

When Lawlor designs a game, he aims it for where he thinks 80 percent of them are going to end up: street locations. On the West Coast, that means 7-Elevens; in the Midwest and on the East Coast, it's bars.

"That means I don't aim my games toward 12-year-olds, but that doesn't mean I don't want kids to play them," he said. "They're for the guys in the street locations, who want to have as much fun as the kids in arcades."

Would we see a game like *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* from Pat Lawlor? Don't hold your breath.

"For me personally, it would be absolutely the worst theme I could put on the streets," he said. "There are some who might like to try that, but you won't see it from me."

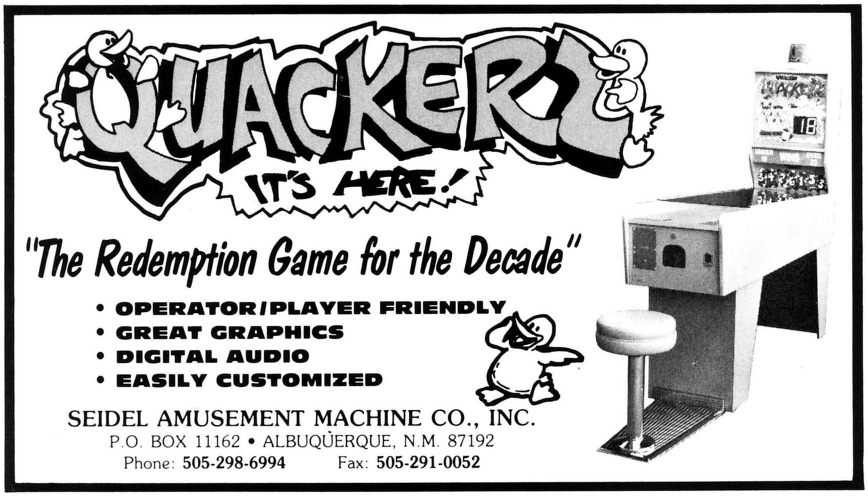
DeMar, as a game programmer, is responsible for creating the game-rule design and presenting the theme's features in a convincing—and fun—manner. He's done such pins as *Scorpion, Black Knight, Space Shuttle, High Speed,* and *Banzai Run*. His personal favorite is *High Speed*, while Lawlor cites *Earthshaker*.

"That's because it was so neat to watch the look on people's faces when the game began shaking," he said. "There's nothing more fun than being able to pull that off, to have people see something they haven't seen before. It's what I try to do with all of my designs."

As we proceed into the '90s, pinball will have to remain original and vibrant in order to avoid the malaise currently being experienced by the video sector, Lawlor feels.

"It goes back to the fun thing," he said. "Right now, video is in the doldrums. Everybody is making games like everyone else. The people playing video games aren't stupid; they can see that they look like every other game of the past two years. The operator wants money from his games. The player is willing to part with his money, but he doesn't want the same thing as the operator. The player wants to keep trading his money for entertainment. If it's the same entertainment he got a year ago, he isn't willing to part with his money. That's where video is right now, with a few exceptions.

"Pinball has been lucky, in that we're



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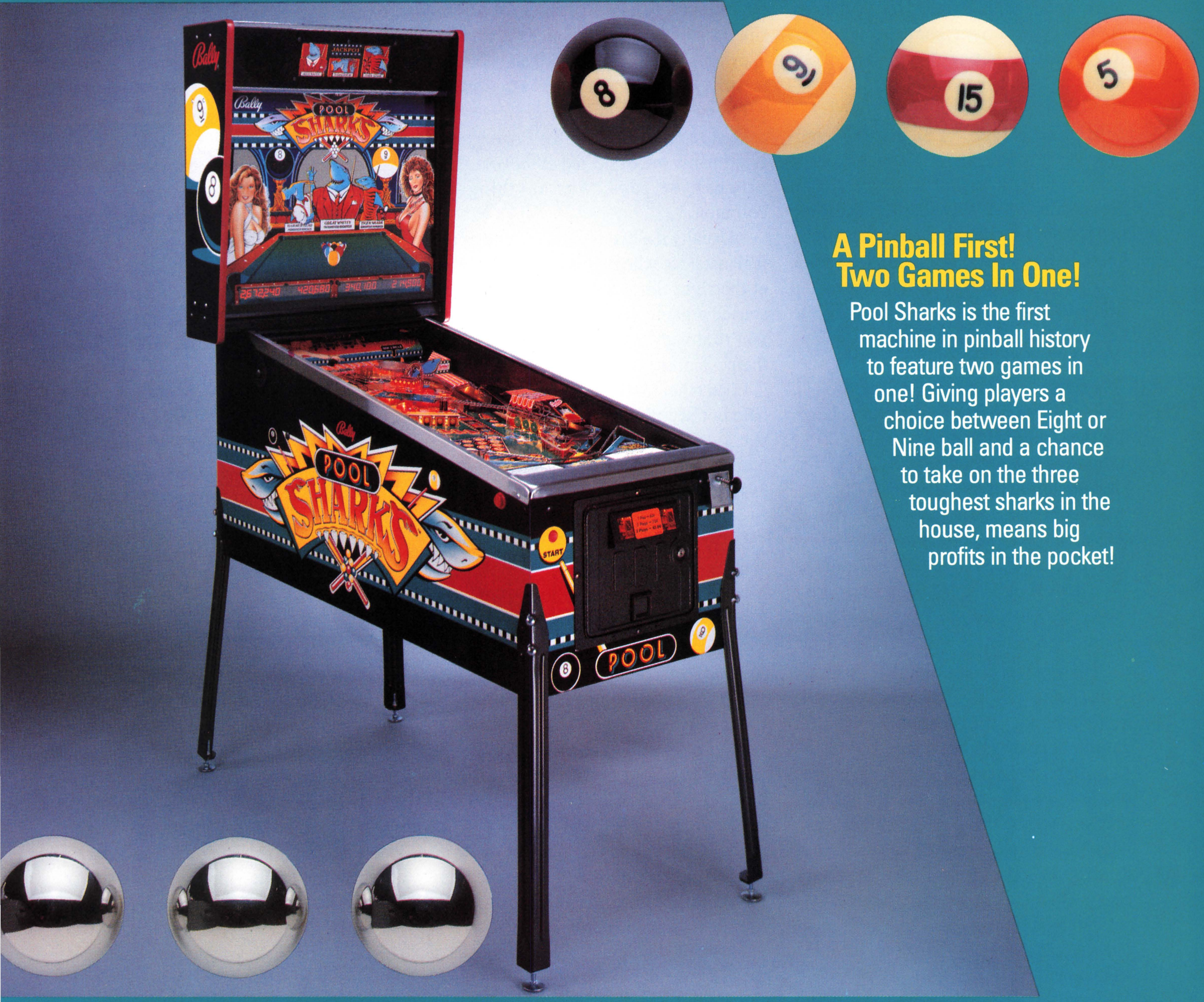

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taking back some of the chunk that video has been giving up to us. The innovative package we've been talking about—today's pinball game—makes people willing to spend their money. As long as we continue to entertain them, we'll do OK. It's the day all of our games start to look alike that we're in trouble.”

Dennis Nordman

In his “other life,” i.e., before becoming a pinball designer, Nordman worked as a computer operator for Borden's Inc. He wasn't particularly happy with the job and looked for one in which his creativity could be expressed. Nordman went back to college, where he majored in product design. The education, he says, taught him a lot about design philosophy and thinking creatively.

Nordman designed a futuristic pinball cabinet while he was a senior in college. He then built a full-size mock-up of the cabinet and brought it to Bally. They liked it and hired him.

Since 1982, Nordman has created *Special Force, Party Animal, Black Water 100,* and most recently, the hit *Elvira and the Party Monsters*. He comes up with a theme or an idea before any drawing ever takes place.

“I'll write down everything I can think of that has to do with the pinball's theme,” he explained. “For example, my first game—*Special Force*—came out at the same time as “Rambo,” which of course was a very popular movie. I figured it would be good to base a pinball on that, with hostage rescue and things like that. I came up with the idea of using imaginary rockets to knock down drop targets.”

Features popular on *Elvira*, as it turns out, were spawned by concepts Nordman had created earlier.

“I had done *Party Animal*; that was a theme suggested by (pinball artist) Greg Freres,” Nordman said. “I figured it would be fun to design a game around that theme. Before I started drawing, I closed myself up in my office and wrote down everything I could think of about parties and what it takes to be a party animal. For example, that's where I came up with ‘Eat pizza, drink beer, and chase women.’

“Then I wanted to do a monster-themed game to be called *Monster Mash*, which would've used the ‘Boogie Men.’ I thought of them five or six years ago. Then Greg thought of doing a follow-up to *Party Animal* called *Party Monster*. Roger Sharpe came to us with an idea for *Elvira*, since the company had a license for her. We thought it would be cool and decided to call it *Elvira and the Party Monsters*.”

Every Midway pinball designer was asked to submit ideas for the *Elvira* game. Nordman's were selected as the best. This process, he says, was anything but common.

“Usually if a licensed theme comes up, it'll just go to whoever is in the right place at the right time, the person who hasn't started a game yet,” Nordman said. “If you're already in the middle of a game, the theme is pretty-well set.”

Like other designers, Nordman can't help but be influenced by the work of his peers—to an extent. He has created some pinball firsts of his own. Take *Elvira*, for example.

“The essential goal of what we do is to make money for the operator, not please ourselves.”

“I try to do things original every time,” he said. “With *Elvira*, among the new things were the flip-up targets, the jumper bumpers, the ‘Boogie Men,’ and the ramp that goes downhill and uphill. I used it in *Black Water*, but not a lot of people saw that, so I decided to use it over again in *Elvira*.”

One thing that Nordman is trying to do with all of his designs is incorporate more three-dimensional action.

“This is something pinball can offer that video can't,” he said. “That's why I have the ball going downhill and uphill, or why the ‘Boogie Men’ jump up and down. My next game is going to have some more 3-D kinds of mechanical things happening. As far as themes, I've been most successful with humorous, light-hearted ones. The game I'm working on now is in that vein. I'd like to think I could handle any kind of theme; it's just that the lighter stuff has worked out very well.”

Nordman agrees that a pinball game could have too many features, making it a turn-off to players. If a game is too hard, only the best players will put their quarters in.

“Sure, you could have a game that's too complex,” he said. “It becomes intimidating when you don't know what to do. Usually a game is too expensive with the original design anyway, so we end up taking something out of it. Operators won't buy a pinball game if it costs too much.”

In designing a game, Nordman says, demographics don't enter his mind. He doesn't think, “This one's going to be for males between 18 and 35 years old,” for example.

“I learn something new after every game I do,” he said. “I try to make each game appeal to all types of player skills. Some features are easy, which make an unskilled player feel good, but I also incorporate features that require a bit more skill. I don't want the skilled players to get bored; they need challenges. No, I don't sit down and design a game for a certain age group. I try to make a game appeal to as broad an age group as possible.”

Nordman envisions continued, even heightened, popularity for pinball, due in part to the mushroooming of the home video game market.

“I believe pinball will further expand its player base, because video players can get video at home now,” he said. “In order to attract some of the video players over to pinball, I would try to add more visual, 3-D kinds of things happening on the playfield. I hope the young kids who aren't intimidated by video grow up to enjoy pinball like the rest of us.”

Joe Kaminkow

Data East Pinball is in its fourth year of existence. It's been a gradual climb toward reaching a level of respectability among operators, a point where they can look at a Data East pin and say, “I know I'm getting a good, solid earner.”

One man who's seen this progression is Joe Kaminkow, the director of design. Among the games he and “teammates” Ed Cebula, engineering director, and John

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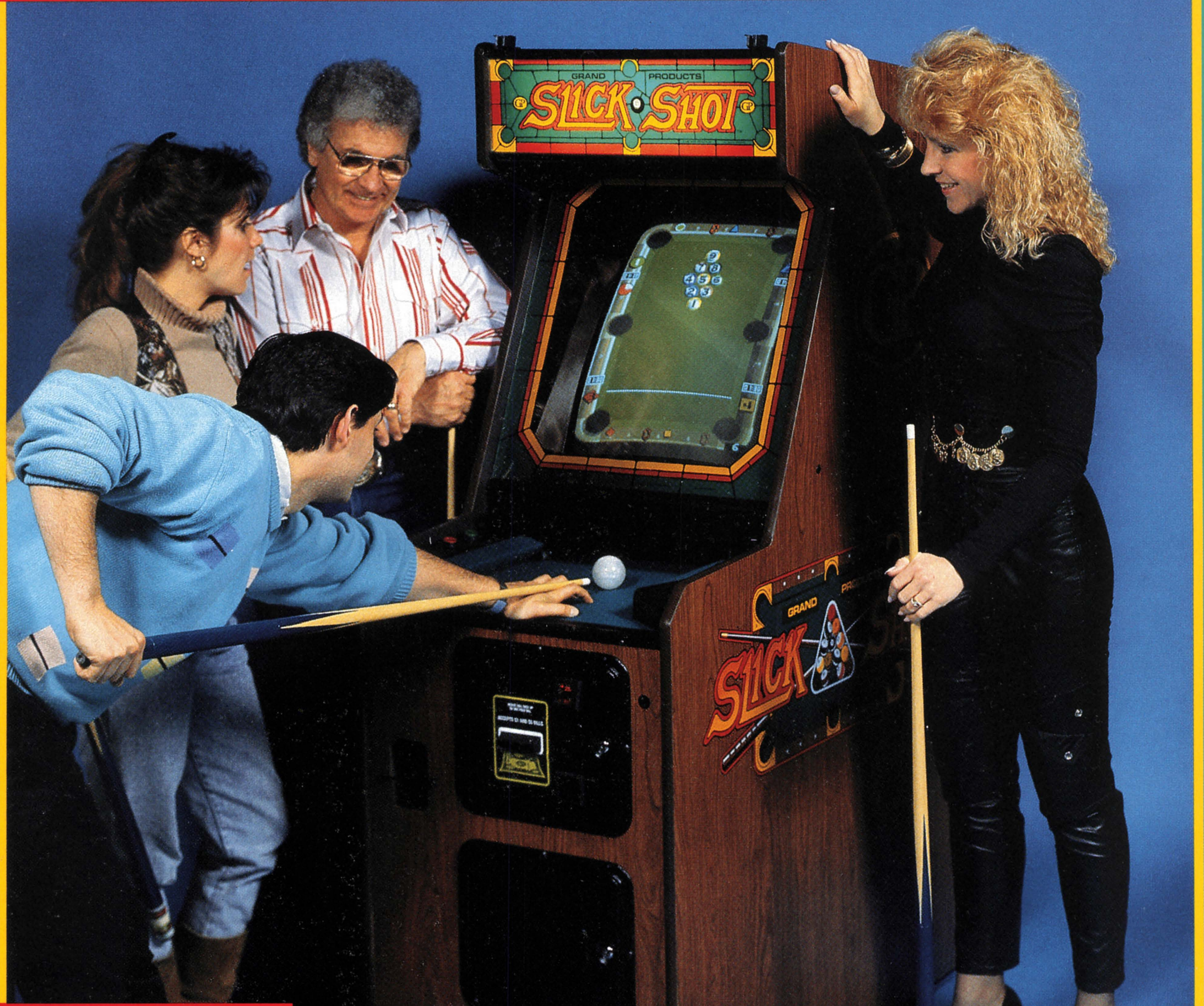
GRAND PRODUCTS
SLICK SHOT
GRAND
SLICK

25¢
INSERT BILL FACE UP
DO NOT FOLD BILL
ACCEPTS $1 AND $5 BILLS

$1 AND $5 BILL ACCEPTOR
comes as standard equipment

CHALK IT UP TO CHALLENGING FUN!

Pool sharks and video wizards will hustle into their favorite street locations to play SLICK SHOT. An authentic mini pool table, complete with side rails, pool cue and ball invites up to 4 players to play. Then, the action breaks out on the attached video monitor featuring over 30 break, trick and slick shots — some which can't even be duplicated on a standard pool table. Realistic sounds and animated characters keep you on the ball. A true test of skill keeps you coming back for more. Slick Shot brings the thrill of a pool hall to any size room. Thanks to the winning innovation of Grand Products, Inc., it's sure to be a champion.

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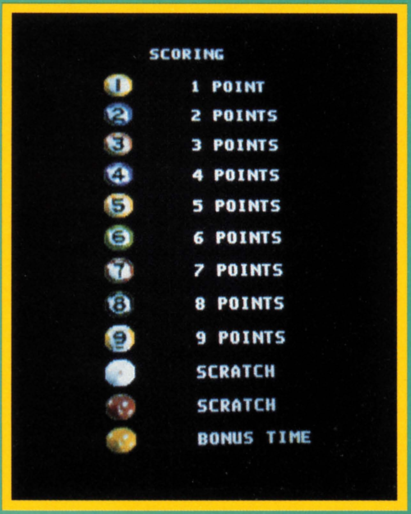
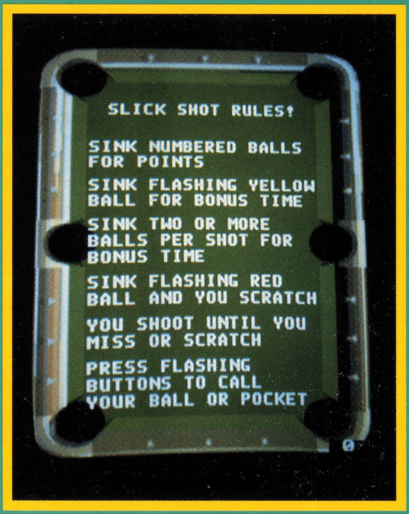
OVER 30 BREAK, TRICK AND SLICK SHOTS IN ADDITION TO PICK-A-POCKET, PICK-A-BALL ACTION!



SCORING

1 POINT
2 POINTS
3 POINTS
4 POINTS
5 POINTS
6 POINTS
7 POINTS
8 POINTS
9 POINTS
SCRATCH
SCRATCH
BONUS TIME



SLICK SHOT RULES!

SINK NUMBERED BALLS FOR POINTS

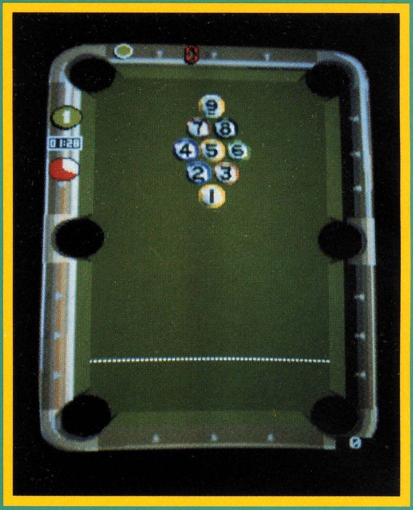
SINK FLASHING YELLOW BALL FOR BONUS TIME

SINK TWO OR MORE BALLS PER SHOT FOR BONUS TIME

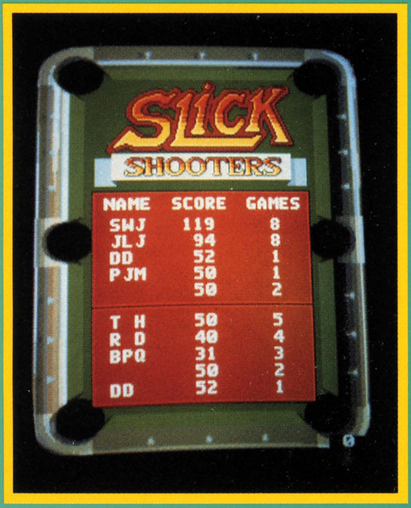
SINK FLASHING RED BALL AND YOU SCRATCH

YOU SHOOT UNTIL YOU MISS OR SCRATCH

PRESS FLASHING BUTTONS TO CALL YOUR BALL OR POCKET

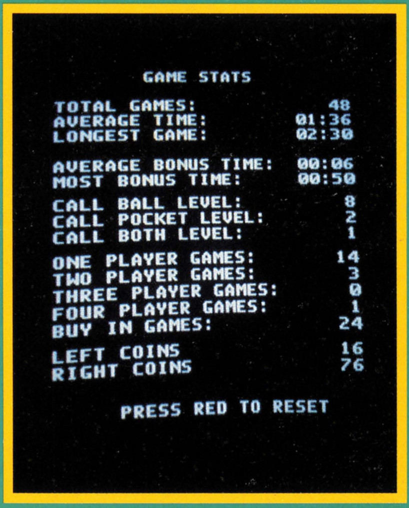


- Dollar Bill Acceptor for greater earnings, comes as standard equipment. Also 25 ¢ acceptor.
- Included are 2-4 foot cue sticks and a $2\frac{1}{8}$ inch cue ball
- 25 inch Wells Gardner color monitor
- Laminated safety glass covers CRT, tempered marquee glass
- Wood grain Melamine finish cabinet
- Rear wheels and hand hold for easy movement



SLICK SHOOTERS

NAME	SCORE	GAMES
SWJ	119	8
JLJ	94	8
DD	52	1
PJM	50	1
	50	2
T H	50	5
R D	40	4
BPQ	31	3
	50	2
DD	52	1



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GAME STATS

TOTAL GAMES:                48
AVERAGE TIME:            01:36
LONGEST GAME:            02:30

AVERAGE BONUS TIME:      00:06
MOST BONUS TIME:         00:50

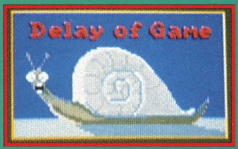
CALL BALL LEVEL:             8
CALL POCKET LEVEL:           2
CALL BOTH LEVEL:             1

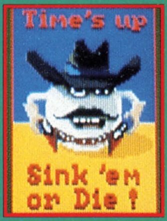
ONE PLAYER GAMES:           14
TWO PLAYER GAMES:            3
THREE PLAYER GAMES:          0
FOUR PLAYER GAMES:           1
BUY IN GAMES:               24

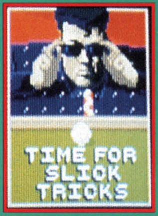
LEFT COINS                  16
RIGHT COINS                 76

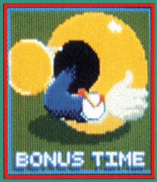
      PRESS RED TO RESET
```

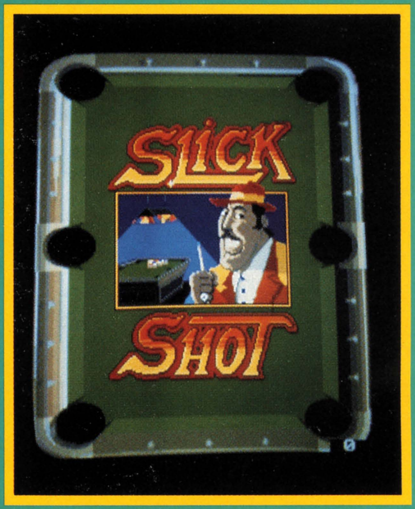
- Exceptional levels of animation, diagnostics and bookkeeping functions
- Realistic sounds











Software
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Patent No. 4872687
Other Patents Pending

GRAND PRODUCTS, INC.
425 Meyer Road
Bensenville, Illinois 60106
Phone 708/766-8282 Fax 708/766-6688

Cabinet Specs:
Height: 70″
Width: 24½″
Depth: 43″
Weight: 295 lbs.

Lund, mechanical director, have created are *Time Machine, Playboy, Robo Cop, Monday Night Football*, and *The Phantom of the Opera*. How does he get his ideas? It's simple.

"I read, read, read," he said. "I read four newspapers a day and anything else I can get my hands on. What I'm looking for are trends, not fads. If you read 20 newspapers a week, along with *Time* and *Newsweek* magazines, you start to find certain items mentioned in all of them. My antenna starts to oscillate a bit; I think, 'Wow, that could be a hot theme for a pinball game.' You're always better off trying to hit something on the peak rather than after it has peaked and on the decline."

As an illustration of this point, Kaminkow explained that Data East began doing *Phantom* in November 1988. The book was just beginning to be reissued in the book stores, for example.

"Also, NBC started talking about doing a mini-series in December 1988, the one that aired right after the last ACME," he said. "ABC was talking about doing an updated Phantom; the Fox Network was discussing a Phantom TV show. We got lucky and picked up on a theme, as opposed to going to a show and licensing something that's already hot. Clearly, there's room to go find a *Turtles* after it's hit. You have to do your homework and try to forsee what's going to strike a responsive chord."

Kaminkow says his philosophy is to design games that have a little something for everyone, instead of ones that attract one type of player at the expense of others, namely women and young children.

"You don't want to make a product that's threatening to females or unskilled players," he explained. "But then again, you don't want to make a 'give-away' game, one that's too easy. I try to ensure that there's something on the low end for the player who isn't too good; give him some gratifying shots or good audio/light feedback for doing something right. I also crank it up a notch for the guy who wants to get into the game real deep. The games have features that will keep him challenged."

What makes one pinball machine stand out from others? Why would Pinball A draw rave reviews while Pinball B, though looking much the same, receive only a lukewarm response?

"The difference between a good pinball and a *great* pinball is the last five percent," Kaminkow said. "You can get the first 95 percent of the machine done in five percent of the time, but the last five percent takes 95 percent of the time. It's polishing the cherry, getting the more dazzling effect, percentaging it right. We've been pulling the ball time down a bit more. As manufacturers, we were giving away too much for a quarter. You can't do that and make money anymore."

Kaminkow sums up Data East's company policy this way: "less is more."

As was mentioned before, Data East does not believe in the policy of putting the designer or the design team's names on the machine. It's due to the belief that he who lives by the sword dies by the sword, Kaminkow says.

"It's a Data East Pinball game, simple as that," he said. "You may have a hot game, then follow it up with a bad one. Operators will remember that the next time they see your name. On occasion, though, you will see our initials on the playfield, or in the case of *Phantom*, Gary's (Stern) and Ed's picture. There will be one or two games in the future where we're so proud of the product, we wanted to put our names on it. Everyone pitched in and worked very hard, but you won't see our names bigger than the game's name or the company's name in the middle of a bottom arch or between the flippers. Our egos don't have to be stroked."

Never known as one to shy away from bold predictions, Kaminkow gazed into his crystal ball and predicted a bright future for his company.

"We're going to do things in the next 12 months that will forever change the way you hear, look at, play, and feel pinball," he said. "Data East is going to change the way pinball is perceived. Our next piece is coming out in June, *Back to the Future: The Pinball*. The movie *Back to the Future 2* gets released on videocassette at the end of May, and *Back to the Future 3* opens during Memorial Day weekend. It'll have a 'twin jackpots' feature that's never been on a pinball before. There's also music from Huey Lewis and the News and ZZ Top, along with artwork from Paul Faris.

"We're really trying to innovate; we were the first ones to utilize things like digital stereo, solid-state flippers, and well-coordinated lights and sound. I want the player to walk away saying, 'Gosh, that was sure fun.' We can do that. Games today are almost like a movie, with a beginning, middle, climax, good guys, bad guys, color, lights, sound, speech—a grand production. We create one hell of an entertainment value for 50 cents."

More important than looking at successful games by your own company or your competition, Kaminkow says, is analyzing those that were failures and why. It's the only way to elevate the quality of future games.

"If you do something similar to what another designer did, you have to make it one step better."

"We're very analytical in what we do; we analyze the successes and the pitfalls," he said. "Look at the formulas. People like games with pop bumpers, for example. The ones without them traditionally fail. Players also like a jackpot shot as opposed to none, a mechanical gadget that moves, an automatically percentaged feature, and so on. Of course, you can't do all of these things in every game because of cost factors. Having a strong, licensed theme is important, too, but you certainly can do a good pinball without it."

Kaminkow believes pinball will begin to share the market in greater numbers, with Data East leading the way. "You'll see what I mean in New Orleans (AMOA '90)," he concluded. "We're doing some novel things to dramatically change the genre. The rest of the world will follow."

Jon Norris

Norris, designer of such Premier games as *Diamond Lady, Bad Girls, Hot Shots,* and *Lights, Camera, Action!*, came to the company four years ago with a background as a game technician. He had designed and built a game on his own, worked up a resume, and submitted it to the four U.S. manufacturers before hearing from Premier.

Norris doesn't go out in active pursuit of game themes or features. Usually the ideas simply pop into his head when he least expects it.

"With layouts, for example, I'll experiment around until I find something that I like," Norris said. "I make changes, play it for a while, then make more changes until I'm happy with it."

The amount of time it takes for a pin to go from initial drawings to final fruition varies greatly from project to project, Norris says.

"Some games we work on for several months, while others don't take as long," he explained. "It depends on how soon you need the game and when the market is right for a particular theme. As far as which designer is going to do a game, it usually comes down to whose turn it is. But that doesn't always work out. For example, *Silver Slugger* had to be ready for the baseball season. We couldn't wait on that one; it had to get out. John Trudeau designed that one, and Ray Tanzer is the third member of the design staff."

Norris says he prides himself on devising new game features, rather than taking something on a competitor's machine and improving it.

"If you do something similar to what another designer did, you have to make it one step better," he said. "I'd rather come up with original features that have never been seen before. I came up with 'double your entire score' on *Diamond Lady*; 'select a feature,' where the player selects his award; the bonus round concept, where you play for one specific objective, instead of many objectives at the same time; a 'catch-up' feature, which allows me to come from behind and catch your score if I hit it; 'countdown bonus,' where a bonus starts off at a certain level then counts down; and a couple of other new ones that haven't been on games yet, so I can't say."

"Video games don't give you the physical interaction that pinball machines do."

Silver Slugger drew praise at ACME '90 for its simplistic design; it was hailed for "getting back to basics." Norris says it was the type of game operators had been waiting for.

"I really believe in the concept of *Silver Slugger*," he said. "It's a game with less ball hang-ups and fewer mechanical devices to break down; therefore, it's a better game for street operators to put in locations miles away. There's nothing more irritating for an operator than having to drive 35 miles to fix a ball stuck behind a ramp. The design is simpler, so that a guy in a tavern can walk right up and play it without having to read the instruction card 10 times.

"Also, the pricing is lower than most pins, which allows the operator to get a faster return on his investment. I'm glad to see us being a leader in this; it's an area that's been overlooked lately in the pinball industry."

Silver Slugger was the first pin offered on Premier's "SL line" of games. Geared toward the street operator, these machines will be less expensive and require less service, Norris explained. Depending on what game Premier feels is right to come out at a given time, it will be either an SL game or a regular one from the Premier line.

Norris says he doubts Premier will ever begin putting the names of the design team on a game. Too many different people work on a project; it wouldn't be fair to only list a handful on the game, he feels. "Unless every game you make is an absolute hit, the policy of identifying the designer on a game could come back to haunt you in the long run," Norris said.

What could someone expect from a typical Jon Norris design? Is there a common thread that appears in every one of his pinball machines?

"My trademark is having an ultimate feature on each game," he said. "After you've done everything there is to do, you still have this feature to challenge your skills. One good example of this was on *Hot Shots*. After you got all drop targets down on one side, but left all drop targets *up* on the other side, you received 10 specials. All of my games have a feature that's possible for the player to get, but not probable."

It is the physical interaction that takes place on a pinball machine which has kept it popular all these years, Norris believes.

"It's real, not something on a TV screen like video," he said. "On a pinball machine, whenever you flip, there's something physical happening. A video screen has images that are all computer-generated. You don't get the interaction that a pinball machine gives you.

"Also, when I walk up to a pinball machine, I have no idea what my final score is going to be. It could be anywhere from 400,000 to 18 million. I could pretty much tell you what my final score on a video game is going to be, within maybe 20 percent, before I even begin. There's something about pinball that I can't quite describe in words, but I feel it in my gut." ☐

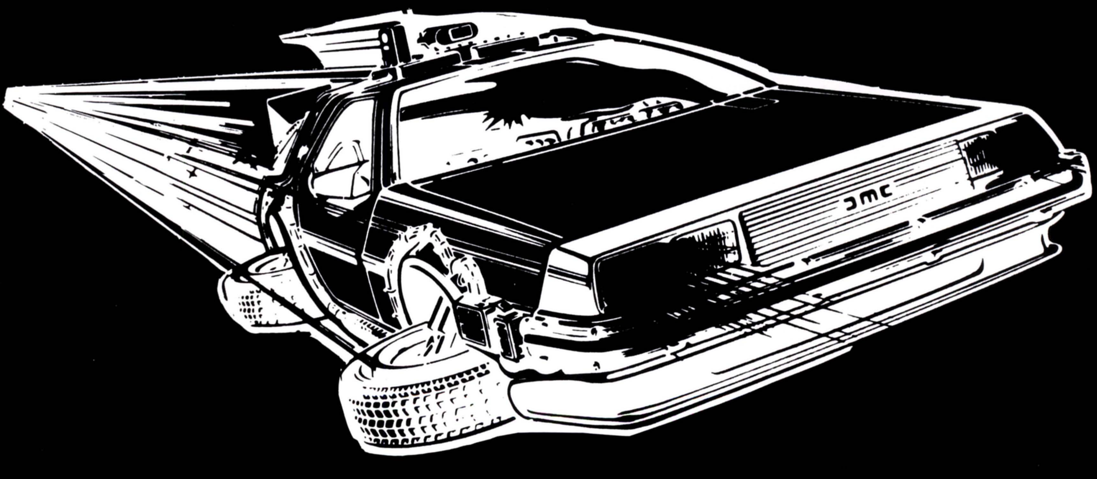
New Orleans
AMOA Expo '90
October 25-27
New Orleans Convention Center

The Amusement & Music Operators Association
International Exhibition & Seminar for the
Coin-Operated Amusement, Music &
Vending Industry

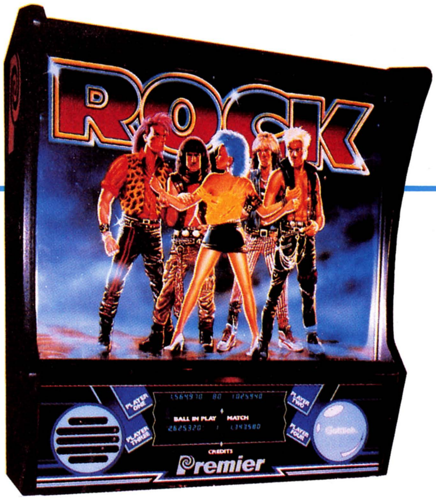
Great Scott!

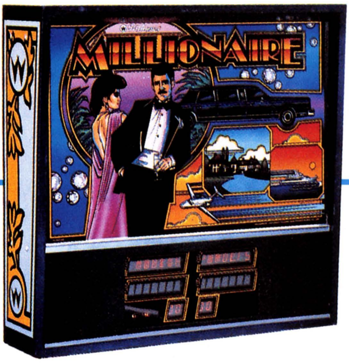
BACK TO THE FUTURE

THE PINBALL™

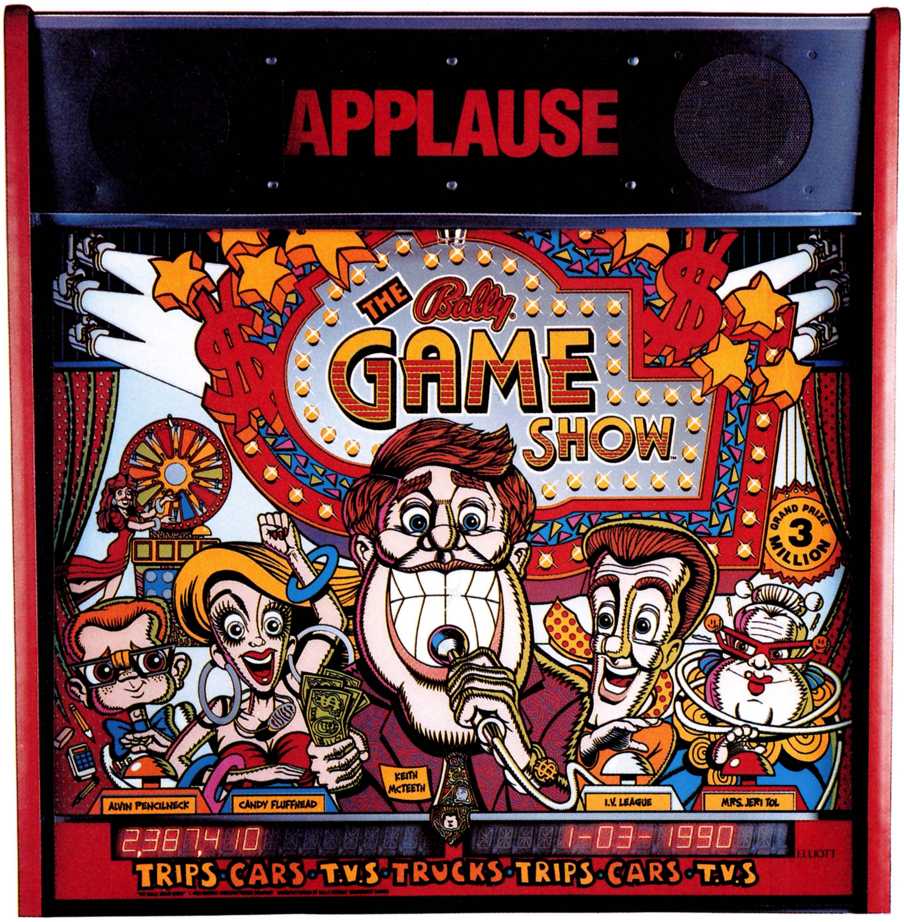


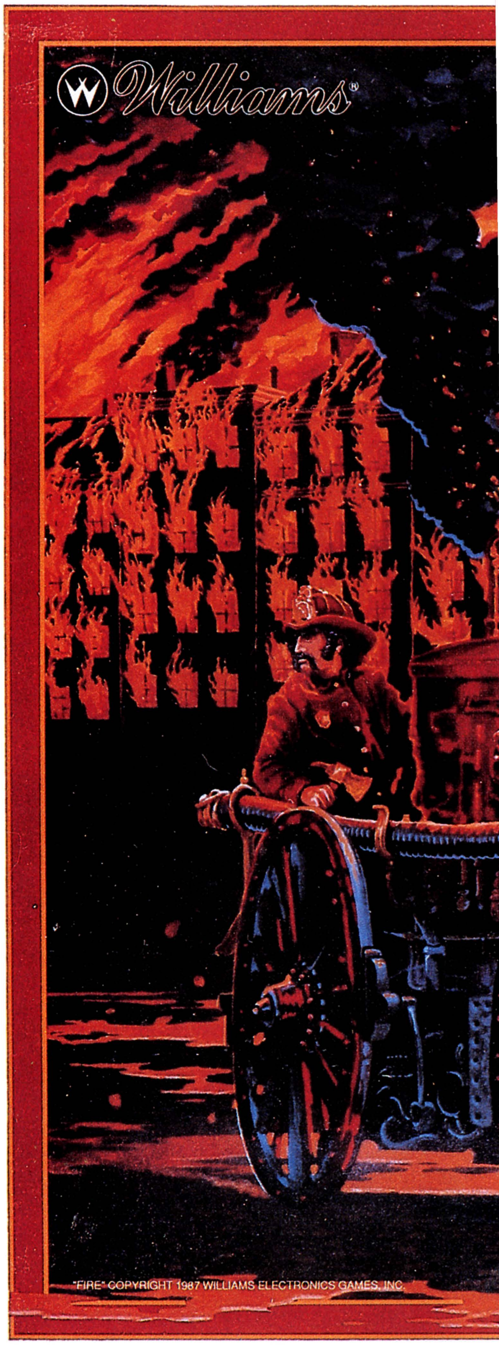
Coming Summer 1990
from Data East Pinball


ROCK
BALL IN PLAY
MATCH
CREDITS
Premier


MILLIONAIRE

Backglass Artistry

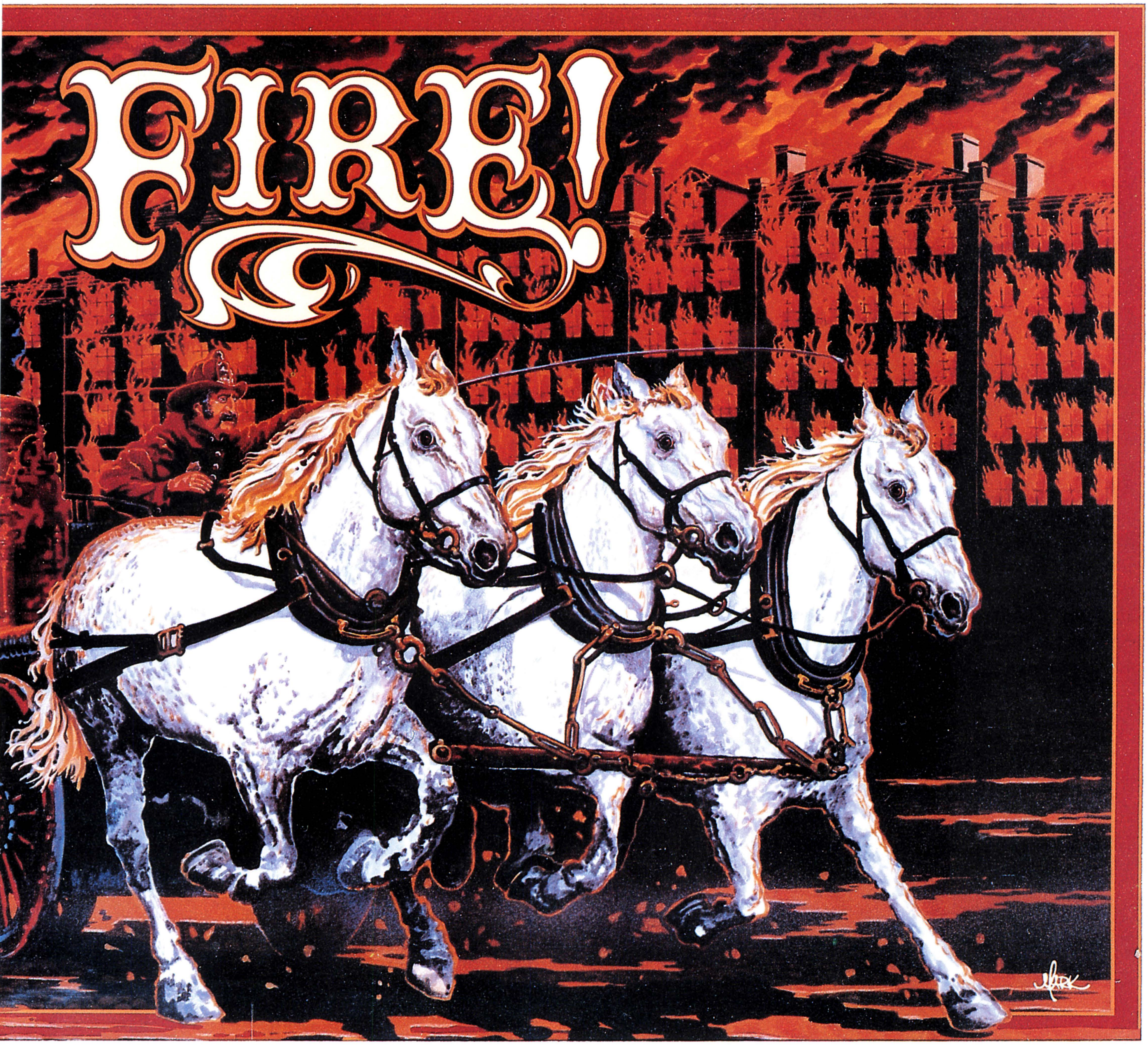

APPLAUSE
THE Bally GAME SHOW
GRAND PRIZE 3 MILLION
ALVIN PENCILNECK
CANDY FLUFFHEAD
KEITH McTEETH
I.V. LEAGUE
MRS. JERI TOL
2,387,410
1-03-1990
TRIPS·CARS·T.V.S·TRUCKS·TRIPS·CARS·T.V.S
ELLIOTT

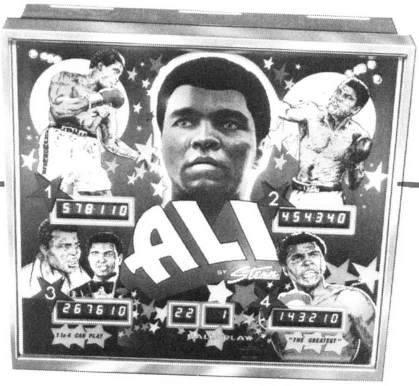


"FIRE" COPYRIGHT 1987 WILLIAMS ELECTRONICS GAMES, INC.

Swords of Fury

Bonnie Theard





After carefully scrutinizing photographs of no less than 362 pinball games produced in the last two decades, and zeroing in on the backglass in particular, I am in awe of this unique art form. From fantasy images in the sword and sorcery category to 101 ways to illustrate a poker hand, just about every subject known to man has been depicted on pinball backglass.

Even unsavory characters such as Attila the Hun and Captain Hook have made it to pinball backglass. Flash Gordon and Buck Rogers made it, Spiderman and Superman too. The Harlem Globetrotters have been featured, as well as heavyweight champ Muhammad Ali, bodybuilder Rachel McLish, and the famous riverboat Delta Queen.

Where else would this diverse collection of characters seem right at home: Mikhail Gorbachev, Marilyn Monroe, Dracula, Santa Claus, and Pin-Bot? These are all seen on the backglass of Williams' *Taxi*. Another Williams game, *Banzai Run*, innovatively made the backglass part of the playfield action.

Each game's backglass stands as a testament to the talent and imagination of the artist, who must carry out the theme within certain space limitations. There's a definite feeling that the images are "larger than life."

The backglass is an extremely important element in the total pinball package. In addition to displaying those all-important scores, the backglass serves as an attract mode for the game. The advent of backboxes on the top of the backglass is part and parcel of attracting players.

Speaking of attracting players, it's no secret what human form is most often found gracing pinball backglass. The female form, of course. Even though baseball players, pirates, Indians, astronauts, bullfighters, cowboys, sailors, and superheroes have all had their turn on the backglass, women have dominated.

Women in swimsuits and Eskimo outfits, women on horseback or in Venetian gondolas, women in the jungle or on the ski slopes; women in all stages of dress and undress.

The men and women who populate pinball backglass are not the rank and file, but rather exaggerated versions of the human body. Never have men been so bold, brave, and muscle-bound. Never have women been so helpless, beautiful, and well-endowed. Women are often stripped of their inhibitions, as well as their clothes, as they take on Amazonian proportions in the backglass of such games as Gottlieb's *Fire Queen*.

It's odd that women are frequently portrayed as either protected (in *Jungle Lord* by Williams), or totally dominant (in *Cheetah* by Stern). The connection with wild animals must really bring out the beast in the player's imagination.

One of my favorites in this vein is *Andromeda* by Game Plan. It happens that Paul Faris was the artist responsible for *Andromeda*. His most recent triumph is the artistic rendering of *Phantom of the Opera* for Data East.

An artist's point of view

An explanation for the recurrence of women on the backglass has a simple origin. According to Faris, "There was always the attitude that the market was male and the pieces were considered street pieces."

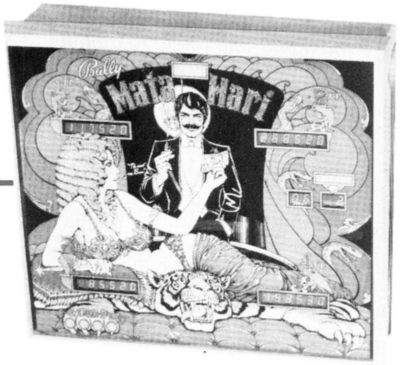
Faris is a respected artist and member of the coin-op world. A 10-year veteran of Bally's design department, he also served as art director for a time. He has been a freelance artist for the last several years and is currently working on another pinball backglass for Data East.

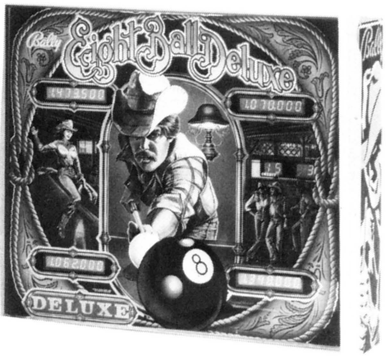
If Faris has a specialty it is certainly the fantasy/horror/science fiction theme, for which he has produced many striking backglass designs. Faris cannot be totally typecast, however. The original *Eight Ball*, which has a definite '50s look, is a

Bally
LOST WORLD

Bally
EIGHT BALL
126030
210510
20
95890

Phantom of the Opera
PHANTOM
JANUARY 22 1990





Faris design.

"The more versatile an artist the better," says Faris. "Pinball art is a lot of fun," he explains, "because every subject is totally different."

In effect, Faris creates an original oil painting with every backglass. When his name is mentioned, several "firsts' come to mind. One of his personal favorites, *Lost World* (Bally '77), marked the first time backglass artwork was done in the four-color process. In this process the artist completes a painting, the artwork is scanned, and a four-color, silk-screened process is done on glass.

This was a big change for the industry. Prior to this time, pinball art was line art, with each color painstakingly applied by hand. Since *Lost World*, the majority of backglasses have been done as four-color artwork. Faris was also first to sign his work, just as most illustrators do.

What are some of his other personal favorites? *Paragon, Xenon,* and the original *Playboy* are the first ones he mentions. Faris's inspiration comes from his family. Just as a writer often incorporates personal life experiences into his work, Faris draws on his family as models, including his wife, daughter, and two sons.

How much latitude does the artist have in the final product? Faris explains that it works in a variety of ways, depending on whether the artist works for the company producing the game or is employed as an independent.

"If a designer has a concept for the game, the in-house artist can work with him as the game evolves. As a free lance artist you are more restricted because the company may already have a name for the game and ideas already set."

Licensed items require special handling, notes Faris. The artist has to work with a certain property and has to please both the manufacturer and the third party that holds the license.

With *Phantom of the Opera* Faris was left totally on his own, asked to provide artwork based on the book itself. Printing for the backglass was the four-color process. The tricky part was unmasking the main character. The lighting technique, designed by Faris, provides a visual removal of the mask. It is done through the special opacity of the ink and the particular lighting technique. It was expensive, but a true tie-in with the story of the Phantom.

Faris admires the work of other pinball artists, among them Dave Christensen, a fellow Bally artist from the '70s who did *Mata Hari* ('77).

Women are scarce in the world of pinball design. One worthy of note is Margaret Hudson, artist for *Eight Ball Deluxe* (Bally '82).

Time constraints are another consideration for the artist. "Typically, a company allows the artist eight weeks to complete the project," says Faris. "The range can be anywhere from one month to three months for a given project."

Common themes

Three major theme categories have surfaced in the last two decades: sword and sorcery, sports, and card games. Some of the most interesting artwork has appeared in futuristic themes carried out in such games as *Time 2000* (Atari '77), *Time Fantasy* (Williams '83), *Spectrum* (Bally '82), and *Alien Star* (Mylstar '84).

Sword and sorcery examples have included haunted houses, volcanoes, evil spirits, sea monsters, magicians, and mythological figures such as Hercules, Cyclopes, and Medusa. A half-man, half-animal figure appeared in *Centaur* (Bally '81) and a half-woman, half-animal figure was featured in *Lectronomo* (Stern '78).

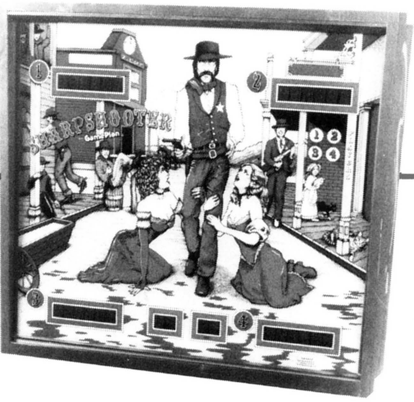
Sports abound; games have covered hockey, football, soccer, tennis, bowling, Olympic games, surfing, baseball, tag team wrestling, boxing, drag racing, skateboarding, skiing, hang-gliding, grand prix racing, and horse racing.

Card games have provided a large

Devil's Dare

Gottlieb
Striker

Jacks to Open
Gottlieb



number of games, from *Royal Flush* (Gottlieb '76) to *Hot Hand* (Stern '79), and *Jacks to Open* (Gottlieb '84) to *Diamond Lady* (Premier '87). Even extra-terrestrials appeared in a card game on the backglass of *Alien Poker* (Williams '80).

The game of pool has provided the industry with excellent backglasses, such as the Bally games *Eight Ball, Eight Ball Deluxe,* and *Eight Ball Deluxe Limited Edition*, plus the unusual *Laser Cue* by Williams. Sequel games have included Game Plan's *Sharpshooter* and *Sharpshooter II*, and Bally's *Fireball Classic* and *Fireball II*.

Humorous touches and cartoon characters are found on many backglasses, recently in *The Bally Game Show* (Midway Mfg. '90), *Big House* (Premier '89), and *Elvira and the Party Monsters* (Midway Mfg. '89). There are all sorts of tongue-in-cheek references in *Elvira*. Imaginations have run wild in the past with cartoon figures, as in *X's and O's* (Bally '84) and *Agents 777* (Game Plan '84).

The circus and amusement parks have been good subjects for pinball backglass as well. Consider *Big Show* (Bally '74), *Circus* (Gottlieb '80), *Old Coney Island* (Game Plan '80), *Cyclone* (Williams '88), and *Hot Shots* (Premier '88).

Space-themed games have also been popular in the past, with appropriate titles of *Space Shuttle, Space Mission* ('76), and *Space Station* ('88) from Williams and *Super Orbit* ('83) from Gottlieb.

TV programs have become pinball themes. Remember "The Incredible Hulk," "Charlie's Angels," "Star Trek," and "The Six Million Dollar Man"? Popular movies have also been depicted in games named after "Close Encounters of the Third Kind," "Rocky," and "Robo Cop."

Even video games have made the crossover in such outings as the pinball *Pac Man, Qbert's Quest, Spy Hunter, Space Invaders,* and *Defender*.

Music stars have appeared on pinball backglass, among them groups such as KISS and The Rolling Stones. Individuals like Elton John and Dolly Parton have also "made the scene."

Photographic backglass

The '80s saw the advent of the photographic backglass in several games from Premier Technology, including *Raven, Monte Carlo, Hollywood Heat, Spring Break,* and *Bad Girls*. The company's attractive *Gold Wings* backglass was a combination of artwork and photography.

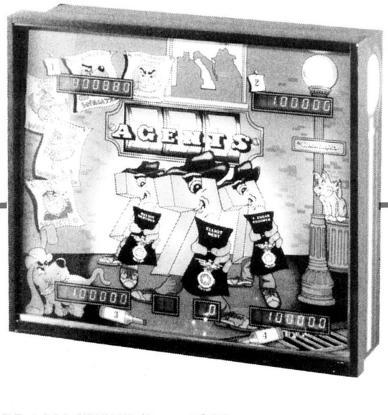
Bally's game *Hardbody* ('87) employed the photographic style as well. And Data East featured a photo of Hugh Hefner and Kimberly Conrad on the backglass of *Playboy 35th Anniversary* ('89).

Licensed properties are appearing more often on pinball games and can be expected to continue in the future. They bring instant "name recognition," a great drawing card.

Looking back on game names over the past 50 years, several appear to be a tad "touchy" for a remake in the '90s. Consider today's backglass for a game named *Gay Cruise* (Bally '65), or one for *Slugfest* (Williams '52). A game named *Happy Midget* (Olympia Games '32) would be considered offensive in today's world. If we rolled out *Beatniks* (Chicago Coin '67) would any young people know what the name meant?

It would be impossible to list all the stunning backglass designs ever produced; there are too many to recount in these pages. Everyone has favorites and the variety satisfies even the most particular pinball fanatic.

Delving into the archives of pinball backglass has been an interesting trip, one filled with admiration for a community of coin-op artists who fulfill our fantasies "to the max." Give us more excitement in the next decade; we're ready. ☐



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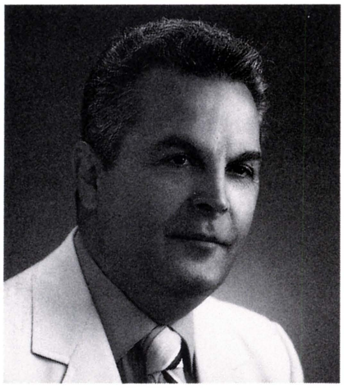
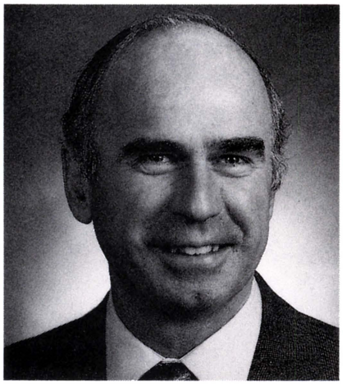

Gene Urso, MCM


Clyde Knupp, Amuse-O-Matic

Q: *How have you promoted 50¢ pinball? And does it make a difference?*

A: "50¢ pinball means more money in the cashbox. Sometimes a location owner shows resistance. But once I show him the cashbox, there are no more problems. If an owner wants better equipment, the reality is he needs to get behind it and support it in every way. And that includes 50¢ play. The 50¢ pins make more money per machine for less play. And that means less maintenance, too."

Gene Urso

A: "When I saw some objection to the first 50¢ pins, I realized I had to get enough out there so there weren't just a few. You have to sell the concept and the payoff of 50¢ play, not just one 50¢ game. 50¢ play is here to stay. So are bigger collections. You won't find anyone objecting to that!" Clyde F Knupp

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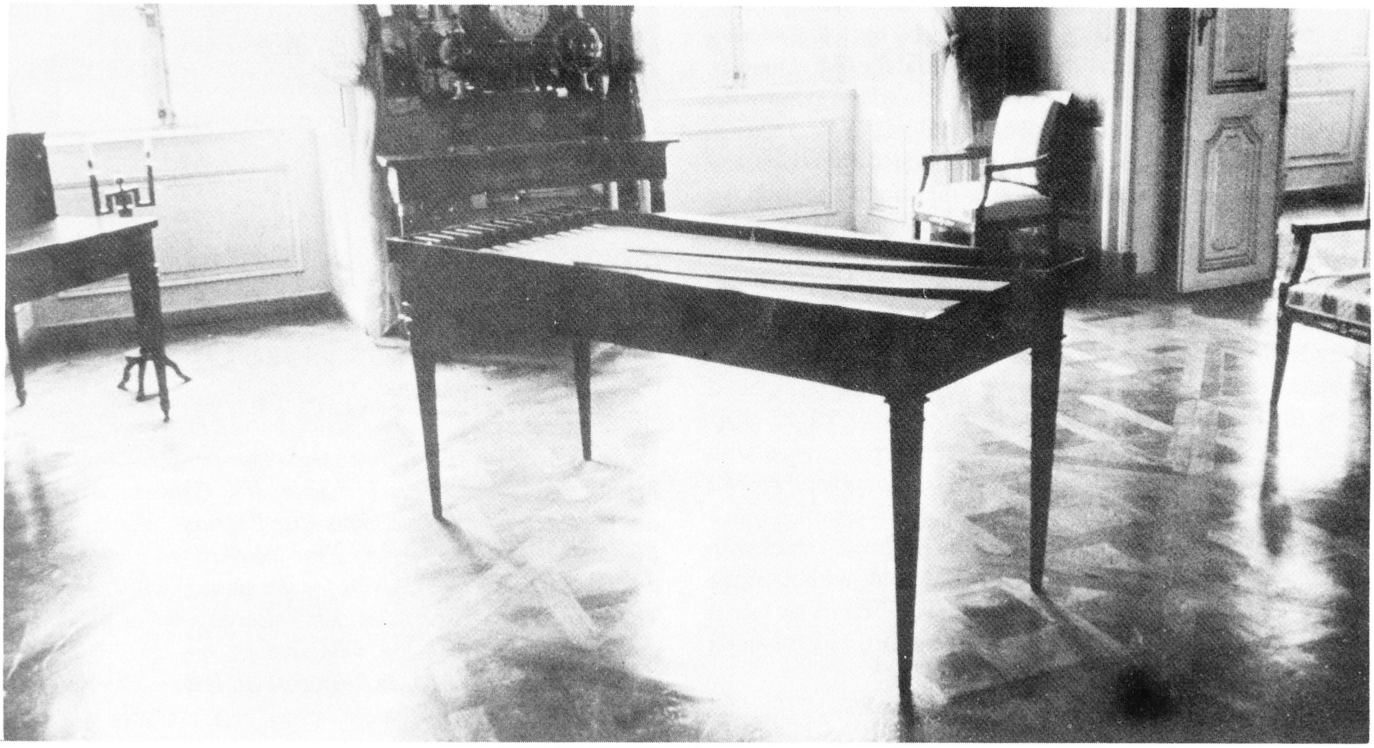

Late 18th century novelty *Bagatelle* table.

The earliest history of the pinball

The silver ball has commanded our leisure moments and shot us on an endlessly wild and imaginary trip across space and time, and flipped us into moments of fame and fortune.

Players have been willing to pay for permission to shoot that silver ball for a hundred years. Fickle as they are, the paying and playing pinball public has returned time and again, and they will continue to do so as long as they feel content that the game has value. There is an unlikely combination of art, engineering, and imagination that conceives each game.

In the hallowed halls of pinball, we can talk of art and aesthetics, classics and nostalgia, talent and skill, history and playability—but without *payability* it all ends. Pinball is a commercial venture whose life blood is quarters. By dropping a coin the player can briefly escape to a land of enchantment and excitement.

Once the player has dropped that coin, the game comes alive in his hands with snap judgments continuously being made over the future acceptance of the game amid a swirl of challenging sights, sounds, and flashing lights. It's this double challenge of play and coin commitment that have inspired the designers and players and made pinball an unparalleled entertainment—a sport.

But the proof that the challenge has indeed been met began in a shady garden over 200 years ago when the basic game was created. Since then over 10,000 games have been made; 7,000 of them operated by a coin. Let's put that in

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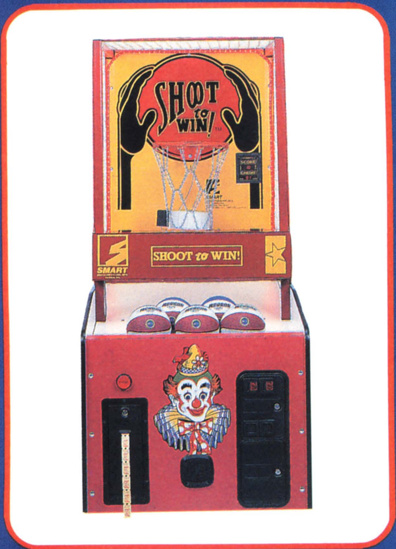
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SHOOT TO WIN II
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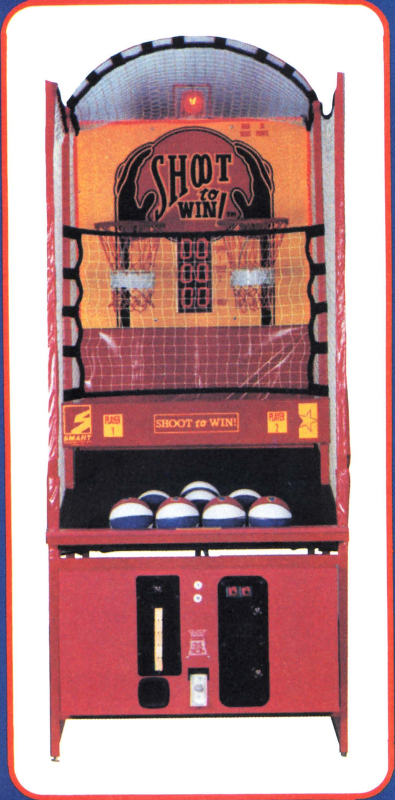
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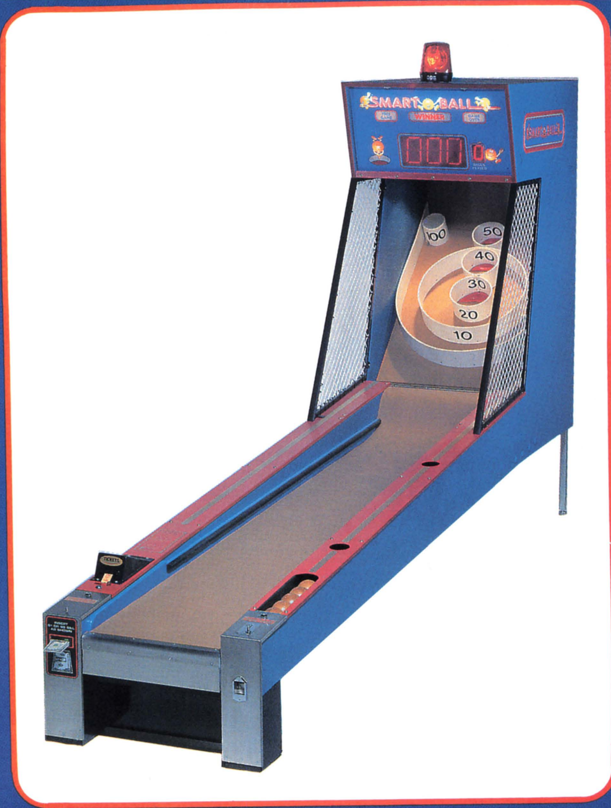
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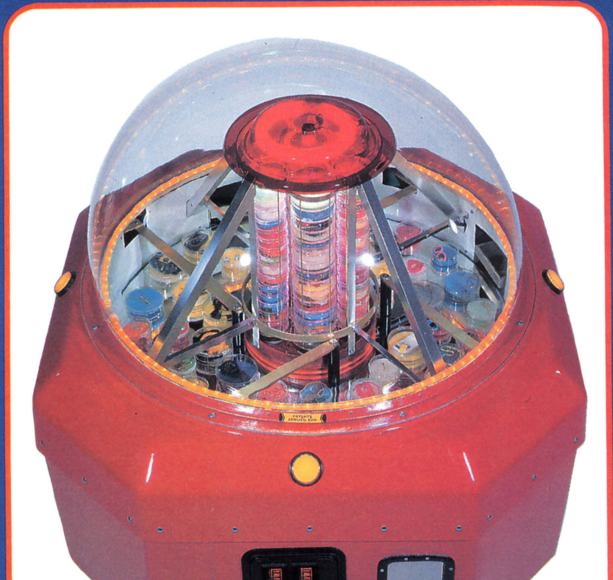

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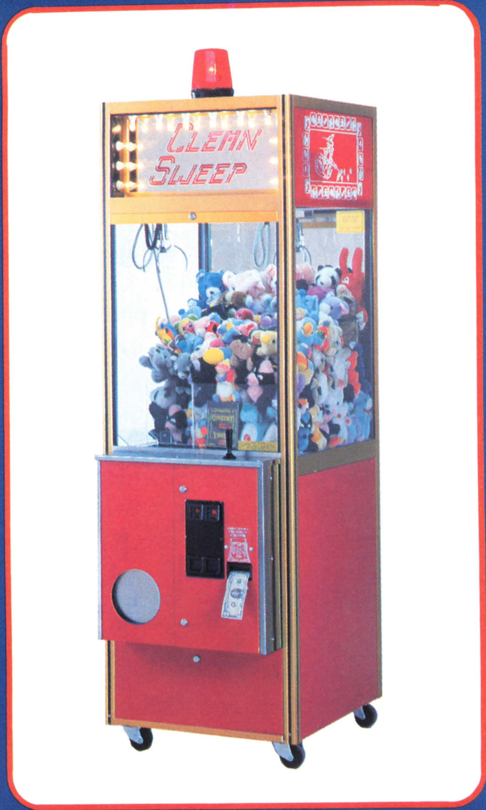
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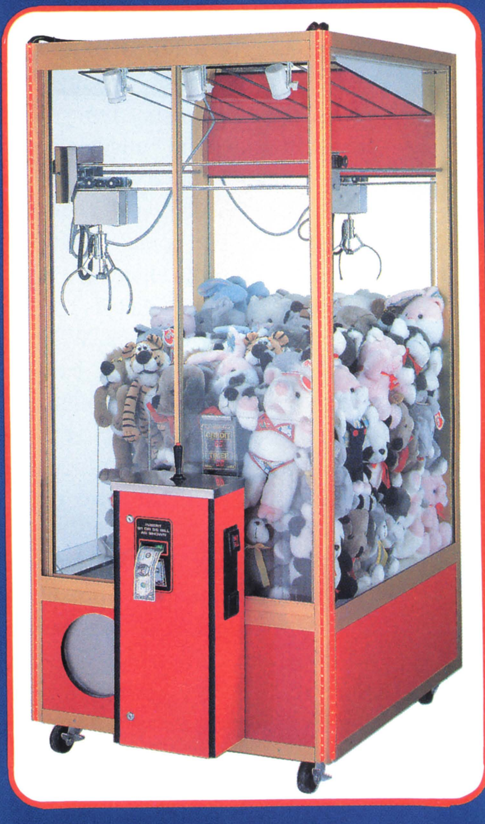

perspective: spreading the games over a century (since the advent of coin control), that translates into 70 different game per year. In 1932 and 1933 alone, nearly a thousand games came to market. Yet each one carried an individual idea, plus the hopes of its makers that it would appeal to that fickle crowd we depend on.

Every single one was introduced with a wealth of invention and implication of value to the playing public. How they fared is the raw material of history. Some of them died aborning, while others had their glorious day in the sun. We're in an industry where the final customer never asks a question; they merely vote with their coins. But a silent question malignantly hovers over the products. It's a simple question: ''What have you done for me lately?''

Just what have we done? Let's step back in time, stopping first at a garden party of the court of late 18th century France, where the electric lights that would light up our cities were a century away from creation. It's 1777, and the worldly wise, barely 22-year-old LeComte D'Artois is entertaining his brother, King Louis XVI, and his wife, Marie Antionette.

The highlight is D'Artois' Chateau D'Bagatelle and surrounding gardens. Money was no object; the site was magnificent. Taking his guests into the game room, he led them to an elaborate table on turned legs. Taking long cue sticks, the players shot ivory balls up a channel to have the balls trickle down a slanted playfield filled with brass pins and obstructions that protected scoring pockets and troughs. The count called his game *Bagatelle*, after the chateau.

Promoted by D'Artois, *Bagatelle* became the rage of France. When French naval and ground forces came to the Americas to aid an almost helpless revolutionary group of English colonies that first signed their Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776, they brought their *Bagatelle* games with them.

A major influx of the games came in 1780 with the landing of French troops to help American forces end the Revolutionary War. *Bagatelle* became the American Army game, played by gentlemen and the rough and rugged populace in private clubs, taverns, and public houses.

''Once the player has dropped that coin, the game comes alive in his hands.''

The game didn't change much until the California Gold Rush in the early 1850s. The booming capital of the gold seekers and their financiers was a sleepy Mexican town situated on an enormous harbor that was transformed into the busiest port in the world. It's name? San Francisco. It was the transfer of gold from miner to merchant that created the Golden Gate. Much of the transfer took place in hundreds of saloons and gambling parlors in a city that never slept.

The saloon supply houses in the East and the French billiard and *Bagatelle* table makers were strained to the limit of their capability to supply these locations in San Francisco.

The industry expands

Soon there was an indigenous game table industry in San Francisco, with five producers by 1880. The most successful was Philip Liesenfeld. The company turned out a large line of *Bagatelle* tables. Liesenfeld's novelty table designer was William Evers, who created a game called *Jenny Lind* that added revolving targets to the *Bagatelle* playfield. Evers could very well be called America's first playfield designer.

The major invention and skill contribution that would make pinball what it is today was soon to come. Following the Civil War and the rapid industrial growth of the eastern and midwestern United States, *Bagatelle* had become a popular child's toy in addition to its larger saloon table model.

With an expanding market it was inevitable that improvements on the popular game would follow. Montague Redgrave, an Englishman, established himself as a *Bagatelle* maker. Less than a year after his arrival in the United States he applied for a patent entitled *Improvement in Bagatelle* that provided a quantum leap in the capabilities of the game.

Redgrave's improvements were brilliant. The most significant was his use of an exotic new material—spring steel—formed as a wire and wrapped in a spiral to create a tubular spiral spring connected to a wooden plunger—the spring shooter. It had never been seen before. He did more. By putting bell domes on the playfield, he added the excitement of sound to the game. Redgrave had unknowingly earned his place in history as the father of the uniquely American game of pinball.

Redgrave searched for a site to begin production of both parlor tabletop games for the toy market, as well as larger *Bagatelle* tables for saloons. Where did he set up shop? Where else but Chicago, the city that would become the pinball capital of the world. The demand for his games soon exceeded the firm's capabilities. In 1875 he moved to Jersey City, N.J.; the firm survived for over half a century. Saloon models of the games were advertised in ''The National Police Gazette,'' while home models began to appear in the Sears and Roebuck catalogs around the turn of the century.

Final production of the Redgrave *Bagatelle* was in 1927, less than five years before the popularization of pinball. Yet his contributions live on in the survival of the original 1870 patent model, which is housed today at the Smithsonian Institute in Washington, D.C.

Change came fast. In 1876 a *Bagatelle* game maker named Severin Keimig located a dozen or so miles from Redgrave made a game that shot the ball along a runway above the center of the playfield, dropping through one of the many holes in the channel to work its way down the playfield. It was the first multi-level game.

To accomplish this, Keimig also developed the manual ball lift to get the ball up to the shooter. In 1889 Jasper H. Singer of New York City, a *Bagatelle* game maker well into the pinball years of the 1930s, applied for a patent on a scoring spinner to be hit by the ball. It was to

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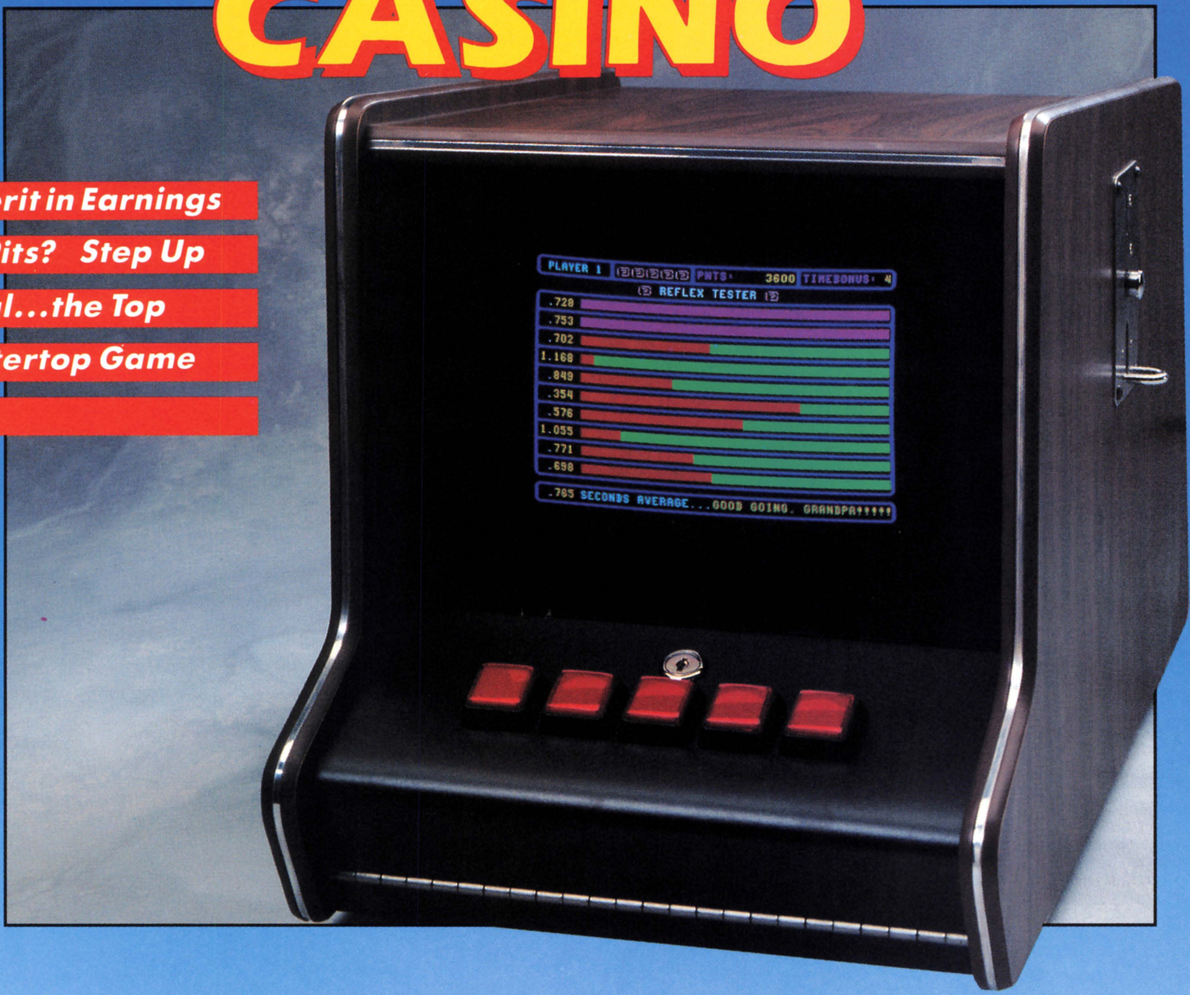
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be the first patented playfield feature. And soon the next major change, the addition of coin control, would start the game on its way to becoming the true pinball of the modern age.

Coin control

The first attempt at coin control of a marble game was British. Londoner Henry John Gerrand Pessers received a British patent on Sept. 29, 1889, for a tall, fast-playing vertical playfield game not unlike a *Bagatelle* game standing on its end. Pessers called his vertical coin-op skill flip device the *Pickwick*. The game survived under a variety of names by various British manufacturers well into the 1920s. But it fell to an American to create the first semi-flat field, glass-covered, coin-operated *Bagatelle*—the first proto-pinball game—just two years later.

The game was created by a 36-year-old Canadian born, naturalized American named Robert H. Little. He already had experience in coin-op machines, having made some liquid vendors for local location placement. His coin-operated *Bagatelle* was actually a saloon trade stimulator, vending a cigar with every play, and vending a second one if the ball—dropped from above the playfield once a nickel was played to race down the high ramp pinfield—sank itself in the center bottom hole. More often than not the ball swiftly disappeared down one of the side drain holes. The year was 1891, and Little's factory was located—where else?—in Chicago.

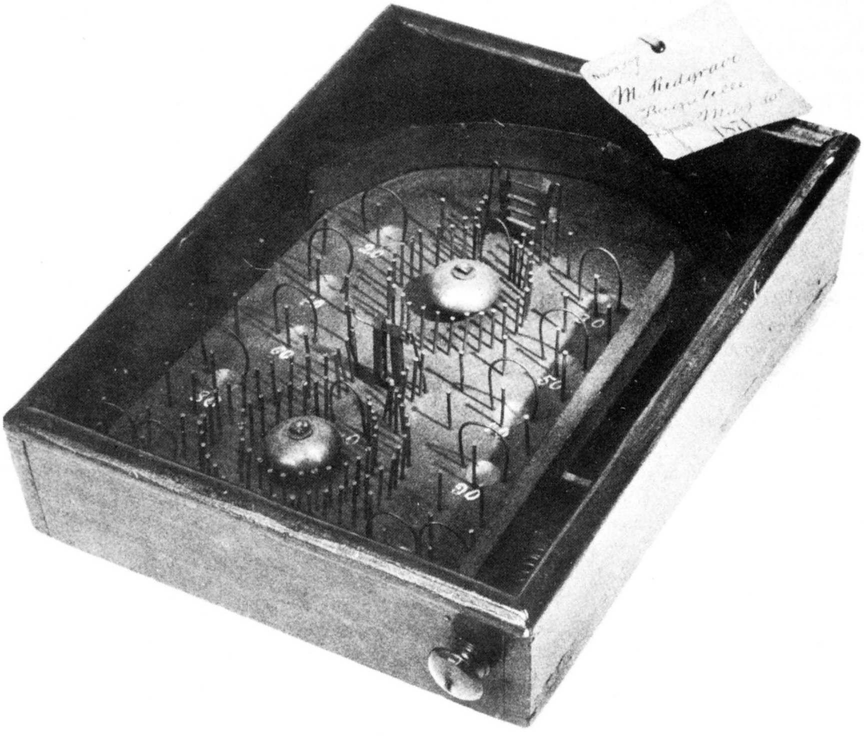
> ***"In 1932 and 1933 nearly a thousand games came to market."***

Spring-shooters advance the game

The first true pinball game, with a spring shooter released by a coin to shoot a number of balls on a much flatter playfield in a countertop model, was made in the back room of a billiard parlor in York, Penn., in the fall of 1892. Its maker was Charles P. Young, who went on to become one of the true pioneers of the coin machine industry. Young called his machine the *Coin Game Board.* Its form was so modern it could well be mistaken for one of the coin-operated marble games of the early 1930s, except we may never know for sure, as none of his many pinball games have survived the years and no patent models exist.

Once done, the idea proliferated. An Alton, Ill., game maker named William Tribble made a pinball game called the *Trading Machine* that mechanically shot the ball up the playfield by a spring-loaded shooter once a coin was dropped. It was the first automatic shooter.

The first really popular pin game appears to be *Automatic Billiard Table*, made by the Paul E. Berger Manufacturing Co. of Chicago in 1901. The game shot a full-sized billiard ball by an enormous spring plunger once a coin passed Berger's original and reliable slug-rejecting coin head. Once shot up the glass-covered playfield, the ball would make any one of



Redgrave's 1870 patent model for *Improvement in Bagatelle*.

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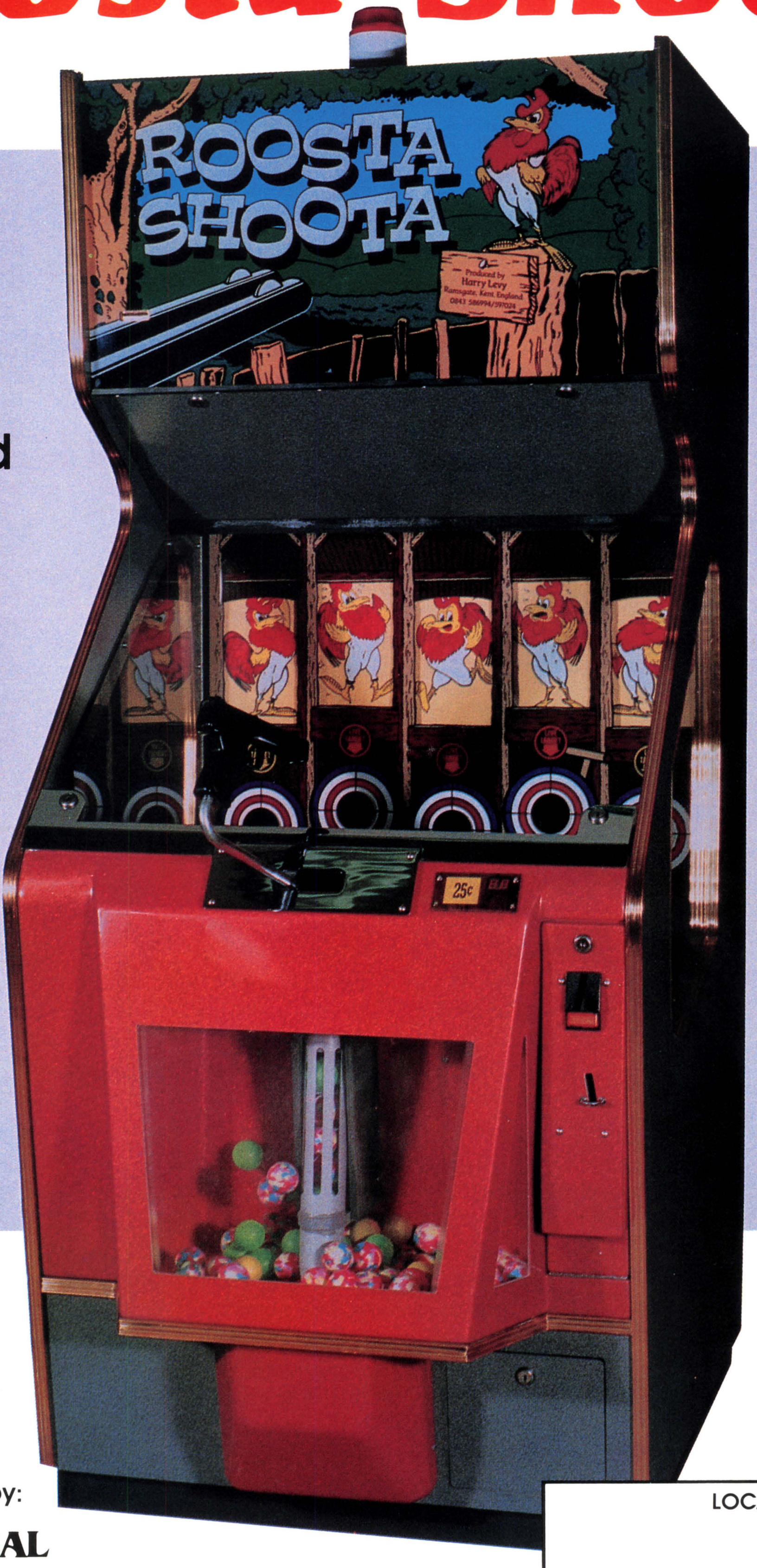
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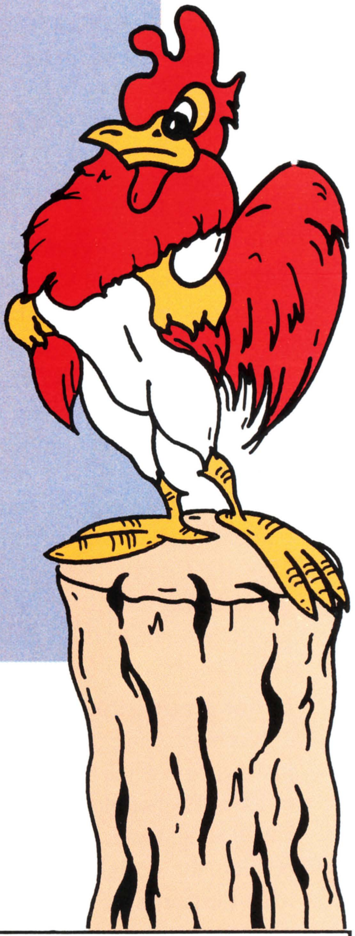

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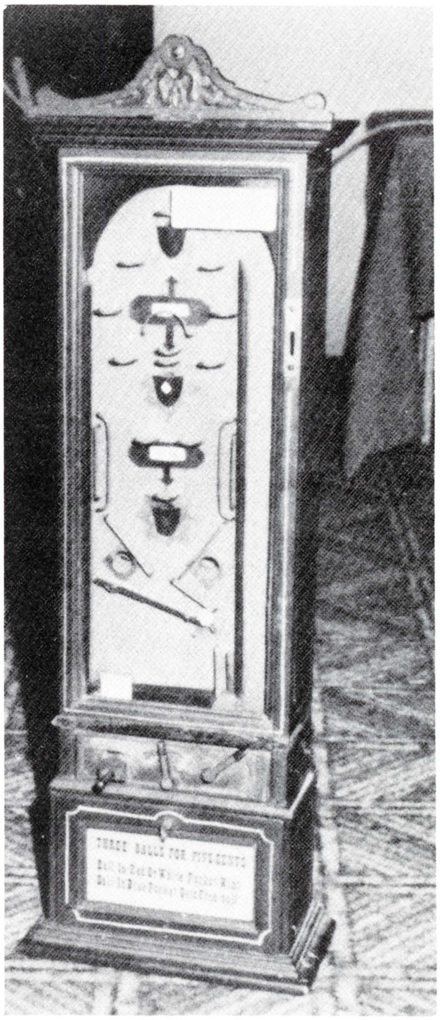
a number of holes, instantly raising a scoring flag at the upper end above the playfield arch. Berger had introduced the coin acceptor and automatic scoring. Berger's game, also called the *Automatic Flag Table*, and a smaller *Little Flag Table*, was made by his successor, the White Manufacturing Co. of Chicago, for almost a decade.

"Pinball is a commercial venture whose life blood is quarters."



Henry Pessers' *Pickwick*.

A number of other successful coin-operated pin games soon followed. *Log Cabin*—by the Caille-Schiemer Co. of Detroit in 1901, later made by the Caille Brothers Co.—was made and sold into the 1920s. Lighted backglass scoring, with colored light bulbs on a large vertical panel behind the playfield of a large game table on legs, was added by the Automatic Game Table Co. of Springfield, Mass., in 1903.

In 1920, after World War I, a Lodi, N.J., game operator named Joseph Jesalik improved on the *Log Cabin* to create a multiple-ball game called *Pin Game*.

By 1927 A.B.T. was making a multiple ball pin game called *Billiard Skill*, based on its earlier target game, leading to a game called *Dutch Pool* in 1931. By 1927 *Ball Shooter*, a coin-operated, multiple-ball *Bagatelle* introduced by the Gatter Novelty Co. in 1926, was a common game. It was soon to be produced in much greater volume by the Exhibit Supply Co. as the *Improved 5 Ball Shooter*.

Miner's contributions

Not much had changed for 20 years, and just at a time when the pin game appeared to have reached its maturity, a dramatic advancement took place that elevated pinball into the straight design track that has led to the games we make today. Its creator was an automobile mechanic named George Miner of Los Angeles. He was a fast-talking, brilliant game designer and the man who most rightfully should have earned the title of the "Father of the Modern Pinball Game."

Chucking his vocation to leap full time into his avocation of amusement coin machines, Miner embarked on an all-too-short career that had far-reaching effects for years throughout the coin machine industry. Miner loved baseball, so he mechanized it.

He created an enormous arcade machine called *All American Automatic Base Ball Game*. He later sold the rights to a young Los Angeles operator named Harry E. Williams, who in turn sold the game to the Rock-Ola Manufacturing Co., which produced it in modern guise in the middle to late 1930s. Miner made Harry Williams a dedicated fan of coin-operated baseball games in the process.

But it was in Miner's playfield game interpretation of America's national sport—in a pinball game simply called *Base Ball*—that George Miner excelled. In so doing, he revolutionized the concept of the game. For starters, Miner created the sports-themed game with the graphics to match. It hadn't been done before. Then, in a dazzling display of components and action features in a single game, Miner packed *Base Ball* with score indicators and a progressive score tally that allowed the player to play as many balls as were needed for an inning of three outs. When that happened, no more balls were available and the baseball diamond playfield was cleared of balls with the next coin.

Miner invented the crank ball lift, with a spring trap allowing only one ball in the shooter, batting, or channel. Miner had literally created the coin-operated, multi-ball, amusement pinball game, including many of the features that endured for decades—ball traps, automatic and advancing scoring, ball gates and cutoffs, automatic ball return, and the most significant advancement of its day, the ball lift.

Remember, this is 1928, a full three years before *Whiffle Ball, Bingo, Baffle Ball*, and the 1932 pinball boom. Only the market didn't know it. Miner was all set to produce his game at his Amusement Machine Co. in Los Angeles and Reno, but he was undercapitalized and could never bring his game to market.

As late as December 1932, he was still trying to get his game produced. He finally sold out his rights to Bally in 1933, giving Bally the basic patent that covered their games until the late 1930s and establishing their prior rights to the ball lift and other unique ball handling features. This protected them against the numerous lawsuits brought by private inventors and other game makers in the early 1930s.

Bally hired Miner as a consultant and made him their chief engineer. Happy, and wildly productive at last, George H. Miner embarked on a series of new game ideas for Bally. The ideas were all in his head as he flew (few people flew in those days, but Miner was always committed to anything new) to San Francisco for the sad event of his brother's funeral.

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Flying back Oct. 6, 1935, the plane in which he was riding smashed into a hillside. There were no survivors. The tragic crash ended the short career of a man whom his peers regarded as the most gifted game designer to enter the field of pinball.

The flipper

Other developments came tumbling out of the fertile minds of a whole new generation of pinball designers in the early 1930s. The flipper, for instance, was first created by Charles Marshall Gravatt of Asheville, N.C., in the summer of 1932. It was spotted by Charles Chizewer of the Hercules Novelty Co., a Chicago maker of early pinball games.

Chizewer obtained the rights and produced a game called *Double-Shuffle* in September 1932. It had eight flippers; four lined up on each side of the playfield to move the ball to the top of the arch for repeated chances at scoring, all handled by two outside flipper levers at the base of the playfield. Hercules promoted the game as ''all skill with a minimum of luck.''

Scoring and bumpers

Automatic mechanical scoring arrived in the fall of 1933, first perfected in a British game and picked up by D. Gottlieb & Co. for its *Register* game in February 1934, quickly followed by Gee Bee, also in Chicago, in a game called *American Beauty.* But this was already old hat, as a young inventor trained in electricity in his father's radio ship created a simplified ''totalizer'' as a mechanical device and then added electricity. His name was Lyndon A. Durant, who soon came to Chicago to become one of the leading lights of the infant pinball industry.

In July 1936, *Bolo* by Pacent Novelty Co. had a drastic impact on the pinball industry. Developed by Raymond Kay, the game simulated bowling, only in reverse. The playfield had the nine pins in a triangle but no scoring pockets. Once shot, the ball bounced from pin to pin, flashing its scoring on a short backglass. Ray Molony of Bally got one look at the game and immediately put his staff to work on a spin-off idea with a much more expansive playfield, packed with wire spiral bumpers drawn up by Bally draftsman Nils A. Nelson under the direct instructions of the boss.

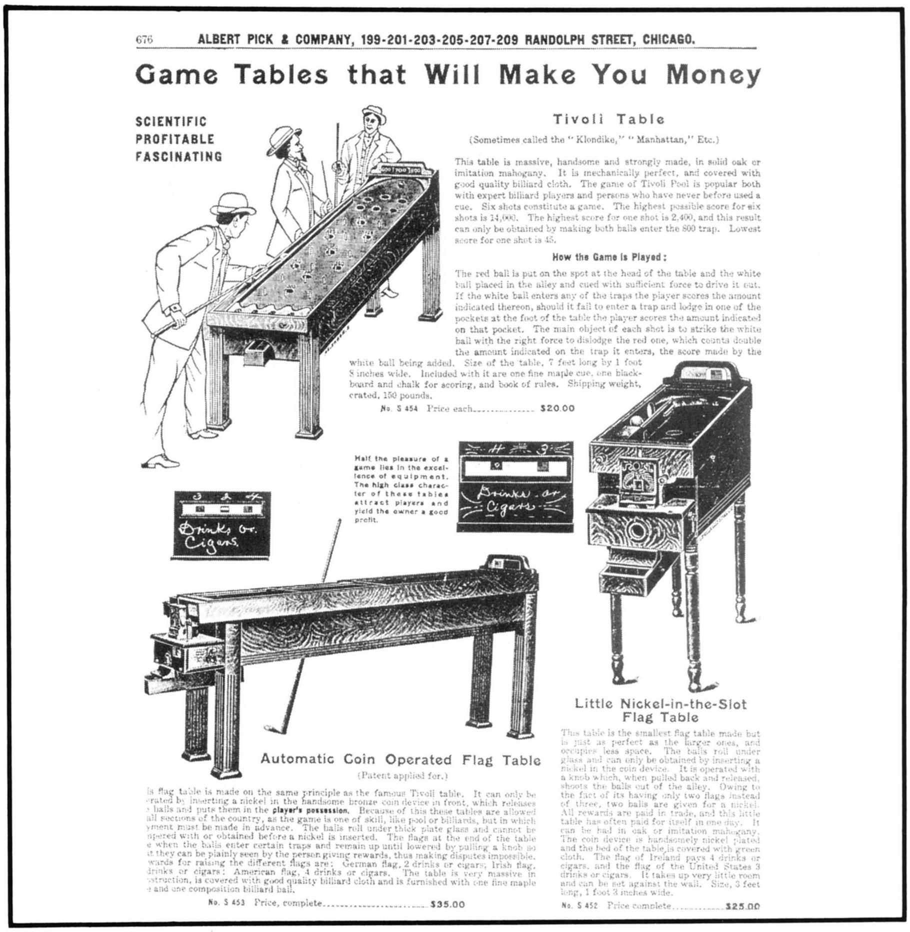
Molony's plastic-capped bumpers were electrified to pop the ball off in wild directions, flashing the score on a backglass. Pinball took another quantum leap as electrified bumpers, plastics, rapid flash scoring and a no-holes-playfield changed the game forever. The resulting game, *Bumper*, was a mega-hit that showed up in a long list of game variations for the next five years, as every maker in the business copied the format.

Pinball history from that point on is fairly well-known by most coin-op people. The point is not what specific features have been added over the years, but how individuals and the industry have responded to the dual challenges of getting the commitment of a coin and delivering an entertainment value that would bring the players back for more.

To historians, it almost looks like everything has been done. But that's not the case at all. We've only just begun! I remember Steve Ritchie explaining his ''magna-save'' feature on *Black Knight* in 1985. ''It's funny,'' he said, ''mechanically it could have been done decades ago, but it wasn't.''

The question I have is, ''What's the next idea that hasn't been done yet?'' How long can it go on? Forever? None of us would be involved in this business in any way unless we were totally confirmed and possibly irrational optimists. To all game makers, the monster game is just around the corner. All we have to do is keep sales high enough to fund King Kong, whenever he shows up. ☐

Richard Bueschel is the author of ''Pinball I.'' The photos for this story were taken from his book. If you are interested in getting a copy, please send $30.95 (includes shipping) to: Hoflin Publishing Ltd., 4401 Zephyr St., Wheat Ridge, CO 80033, or call (303) 420-2222 to charge on MasterCard or Visa.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Tivoli Table

(Sometimes called the "Klondike," "Manhattan," Etc.)

This table is massive, handsome and strongly made, in solid oak or imitation mahogany. It is mechanically perfect, and covered with good quality billiard cloth. The game of Tivoli Pool is popular both with expert billiard players and persons who have never before used a cue. Six shots constitute a game. The highest possible score for six shots is 14,000. The highest score for one shot is 2,400, and this result can only be obtained by making both balls enter the 800 trap. Lowest score for one shot is 45.

How the Game is Played:

The red ball is put on the spot at the head of the table and the white ball placed in the alley and cued with sufficient force to drive it out. If the white ball enters any of the traps the player scores the amount indicated thereon, should it fail to enter a trap and lodge in one of the pockets at the foot of the table the player scores the amount indicated on that pocket. The main object of each shot is to strike the white ball with the right force to dislodge the red one, which counts double the amount indicated on the trap it enters, the score made by the white ball being added. Size of the table, 7 feet long by 1 foot 8 inches wide. Included with it are one fine maple cue, one blackboard and chalk for scoring, and book of rules. Shipping weight, crated, 150 pounds.

No. S 454 Price each................ $20.00

Half the pleasure of a game lies in the excellence of equipment. The high class character of these tables attract players and yield the owner a good profit.

Automatic Coin Operated Flag Table

(Patent applied for.)

is flag table is made on the same principle as the famous Tivoli table. It can only be erated by inserting a nickel in the handsome bronze coin device in front, which releases balls and puts them in the **player's possession.** Because of this these tables are allowed all sections of the country, as the game is one of skill, like pool or billiards, but in which yment must be made in advance. The balls roll under thick plate glass and cannot be npered with or obtained before a nickel is inserted. The flags at the end of the table e when the balls enter certain traps and remain up until lowered by pulling a knob so at they can be plainly seen by the person giving rewards, thus making disputes impossible. wards for raising the different flags are: German flag, 2 drinks or cigars; Irish flag, drinks or cigars; American flag, 4 drinks or cigars. The table is very massive in nstruction, is covered with good quality billiard cloth and is furnished with one fine maple e and one composition billiard ball.

No. S 453 Price, complete........................ $35.00

Little Nickel-in-the-Slot Flag Table

This table is the smallest flag table made but is just as perfect as the larger ones, and occupies less space. The balls roll under glass and can only be obtained by inserting a nickel in the coin device. It is operated with a knob which, when pulled back and released, shoots the balls out of the alley. Owing to the fact of its having only two flags instead of three, two balls are given for a nickel. All rewards are paid in trade, and this little table has often paid for itself in one day. It can be had in oak or imitation mahogany. The coin device is handsomely nickel plated and the bed of the table is covered with green cloth. The flag of Ireland pays 4 drinks or cigars, and the flag of the United States 3 drinks or cigars. It takes up very little room and can be set against the wall. Size, 3 feet long, 1 foot 3 inches wide.

No. S 452 Price complete.................. $25.00

An ad from a 1907 catalog for *Automatic Flag Table* and *Little Flag Table*.

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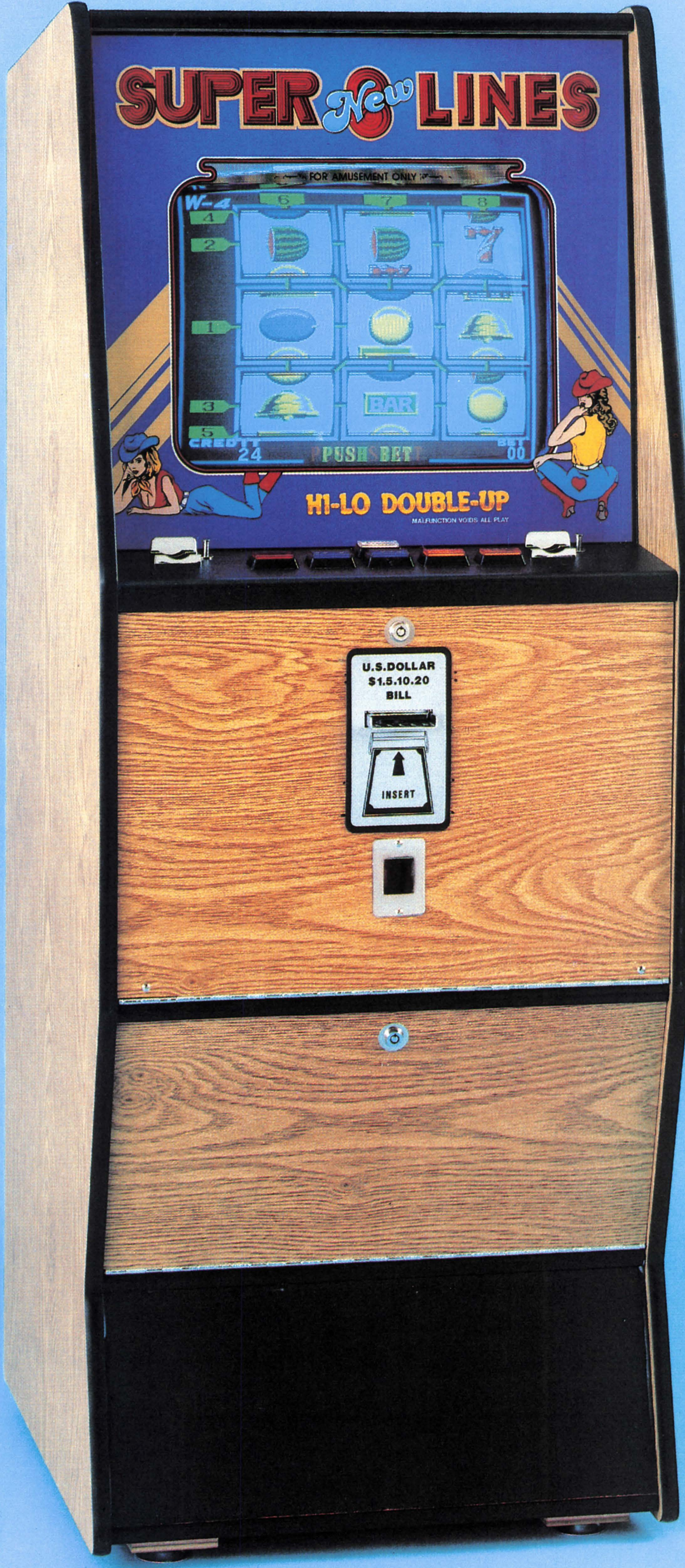
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Tim Wolfe

Following the silver ball in the summer of '90

Summer arcade and music action is great this summer, just as it was last summer. The best games of summer '89—*Earthshaker, Black Knight 2000,* and *Time Machine*—will be around again to entertain us this summer. The hot games to look for now include Williams' *Whirlwind* and *Rollergames*, Data East's *Phantom of the Opera*, Premier/Gottlieb's *Silver Slugger*, and Midway Manufacturing's *The Bally Game Show* and *Pool Sharks*.

Rollergames, the latest release among these pins, has a fast-paced roller derby theme. The expected release on this pin is early July. Don't miss it; you will want this game in your summer pinball lineup.

Last summer had enough exciting pinball, but this was overshadowed by weak flippers on many games. This problem now seems to have been remedied. Data East's patented new flipper assembly has eliminated the E.O.S. switch, and Williams is said to have improved its coil quality by halting inferior coil imports from Taiwan. Premier has also improved its flipper by moving to a new tapered style. It has a high degree of arc for advanced skill shooting.

More pinball games have been set to award replays in the greater New York/New Jersey/Connecticut area. New York has traditionally been an add-a-ball state, but the machines are now giving credits in many choice locations.

Bally
WIZARD!
1-4 CAN PLAY
BALL IN PLAY

Bally's *Wizard*

Overall, matching percentages have decreased. Many players feel it is a lot tougher to get a match today than it was in the old electro-mechanical days. Someone has to look into this and get back to the basic odds of one-in-10 for a player match. LED-readout animation for a match looks good, but the gratis replays are not coming the way they have in the past.

Pinball collecting

Collectors love to do their big hunting for games during the summer. It's when the really dedicated, three- to five-day expeditions happen. Pinball collectors have a reputation of being eccentric. They are always following-up on newspaper ads, bugging nearby operators, or contacting other collectors across the United States and Canada. The goal is trying to find that certain old game they want.

> ***"The problem of weak flippers on pinball machines seems to have been remedied."***

Last July, I was lucky enough to pick up a few new games for my collection, including a good '70s classic, Bally's *Wizard*. When the game is lit-up and sitting idle, it has a hypnotic effect on people. (It must be Ann Margret that draws me to the game.) I don't think there is any other Bally game of its time that has so much fire and color in the artwork, except for the classic Elton John *Captain Fantastic* pinball. The game concept for *Wizard* was based on The Who's rock opera, "Tommy."

Playfield action is good in *Wizard*; it broke some new ground for its time. The game has the flipping flags that are seen in only a few Bally games of the '70s. Hitting the saucer kick-out from the ball shooter is a good skill shot that I enjoy. In a nutshell, playing the game well means that you must build the bonus up to 19,000, hit the extra ball lane, and start scoring specials—easier said than done.

A good thing about the special on this game is its location. Sweet shooting from the left flipper will score multiple replays. Achieving resets in the flag lane three times with some good play to the flag targets, on any given ball, will almost always accomplish this. The left-sided arch return lane will really buzz-up the 10- and 100-point scoring (remember all of those dirty electro-mechanical scoring drums!). The 3,000-point center advance target is a sucker shot that can really drain your ball fast—even after you make the shot. Soft shooting is the key; hitting the center target enough will also bring your game scores up.

I enjoy playing *Wizard*. Most expert players can get big scores, replays, and game satisfaction quickly. Novice players are enchanted enough by the overall game package. It is a notable addition to any game collection. *Wizard* was certainly classic Bally work.

It is hard to say what the pin heads will find in their future travels. One thing is for sure, though: average game prices are going up, and collectors will be digging deeper this summer to get that classic. Many experienced collectors have noticed the upswing in new hobby enthusiasts.

Finally, I'd like to remind you that Pinball Expo '90 is planned for early October in Chicago at the O'Hare Convention Center. The last five shows have been really good, with new and old games alike. There is a lot of trading and selling of pins, as well as an exchange of technical information about them. Attendance is expected to rise this year by about 20 percent, due to the influx of new collectors and more interest from operators.

Pinball Expo is an excellent opportunity for operators to get a sneak-peek at the AMOA games to be displayed. Watch for upcoming details on this important pinball event. ☐

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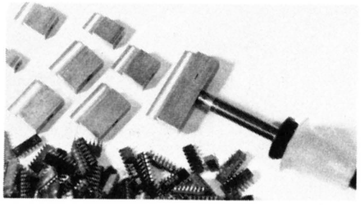

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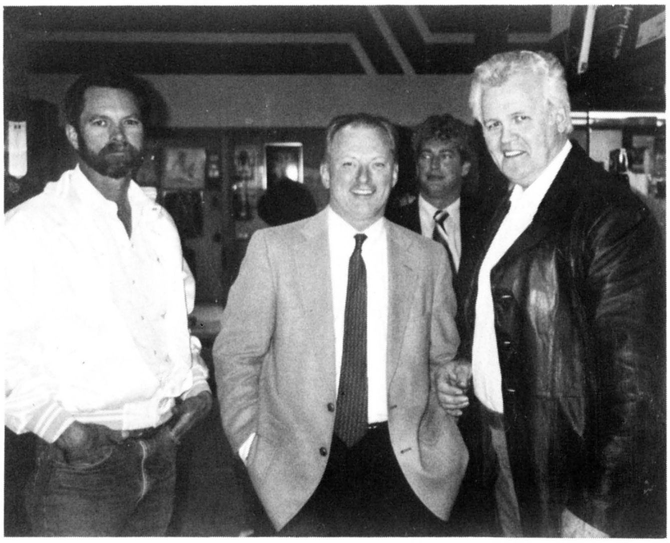
Music-Vend hosts post-ACME event

Music-Vend Distributing of Seattle, Wash., welcomed customers from Washington state and the surrounding area to a post-ACME open house on March 23. Guests were treated to a fancy buffet dinner featuring prime rib and salmon while they had an opportunity to check out the latest product.

Representatives from the major manufacturers were on hand to explain game details and answer questions. Evening entertainment provided by a magician was a highlight of the event, which included door prizes for many lucky customers. ☐

Frank Ballouz (l) of Fabtek explains the game play of *Sports Match* to Don Dapcavich of CJ Enterprises and Kevin Rudolph of Advanced Amusement.

Mary Eckhoff of Metro Entertainment enjoys playing Romstar's *Snow Bros.*


Attendees included, (l-r): Tom Overstreet of Two Guys Dart, Bill Ward of Arachnid, and Harry O'Neal of LeDarts South.

Tim Jackson (r) of Romstar with Michael Damtew of Dunis Distributing.

ALIENS
TURTLES
Mary Hermanson of Konami with Hien Ngo of Dango Amusement by *Aliens* and *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles*.

META FOX
Gottlieb
Silver
Clay Dubofsky of Specialty Entertainment likes the action of Premier's *Silver Slugger*.

PlayChoice
PlayChoice
Sampling the *PlayChoice* system, (l-r): Sean Layman of ASI, Al Stone of Nintendo, and Dale Walker of SCA.

From left: Theresa Anderson of Music-Vend, Jeanne Ballouz of Fabtek, and Lynn Shearer of Dunis Distributing.

Thumbs up on NECO's open house

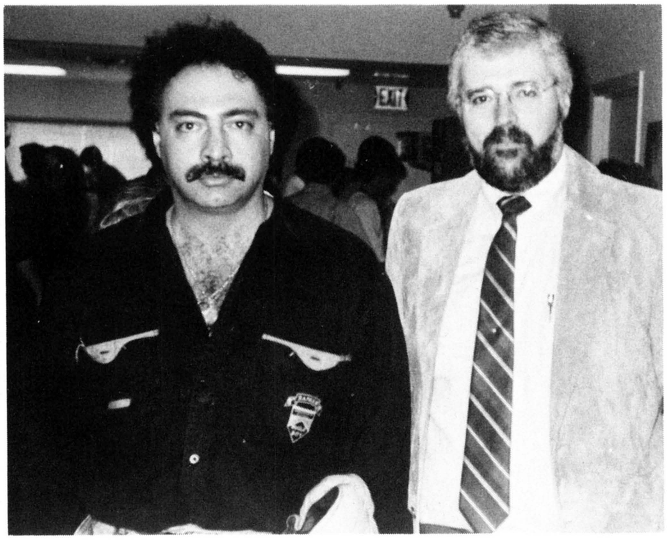
New England Coin-Op recently invited its customers and manufacturer's reps to a post-ACME open house. According to NECO's Rick Kirby, over 300 operators and their families came out to preview the latest in equipment and feast on NECO's famous barbecued chicken.

Kirby gave the day a big "thumbs-up" for both the turnout and the operators' response to the variety of arcade, street, and redemption equipment on hand.

In addition to the great food and array of equipment, operators were given the opportunity to win prizes ranging from free kits to equipment discounts by shooting darts with Arachnid's Herb Healy. ☐

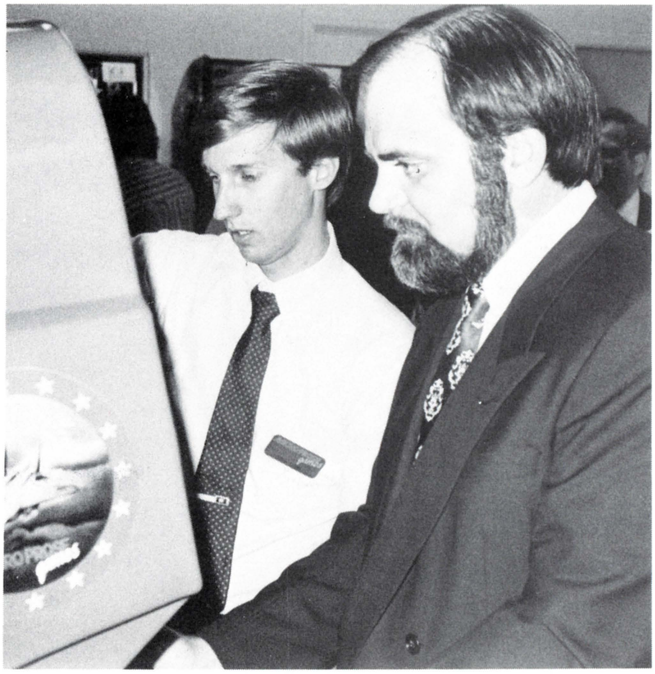
(L-r): Bally's Steve Blattspieler, NECO's Rick Kirby, Williams' Leslie Ross, and Konami's Mary Hermanson.

A shot of NECO's showroom.



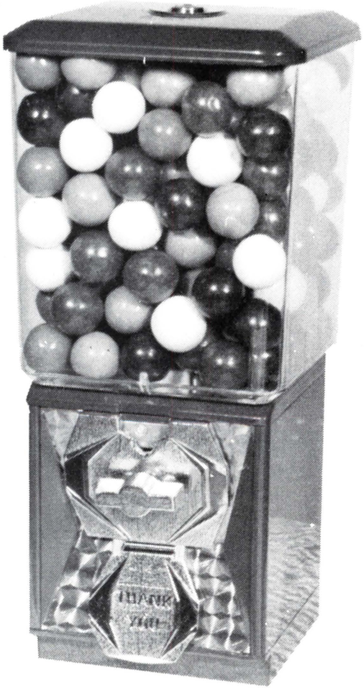
George Abdolla of State Line Amusements (l) with Richard Donlan, NECO service manager.

NECO sales manager Bob Donnelly (l) with Bob Kilmare of Starland.



Bob Radville plays MicroProse's new *F-15 Strike Eagle*.

PN 95 VENDORS



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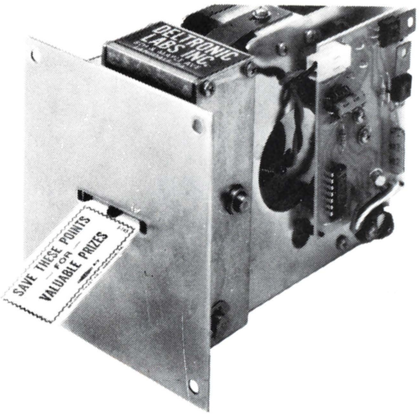

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Valerie Cognevich

It was 4:00 on Sunday afternoon at the Hyatt in Chicago. The ACME show had just shut down, and everyone was busily breaking down their exhibits.

L-r: Lauran Bromley, Darlene Kindler, Jeanne Ballouz, Valerie Cognevich, and Mireille Chevalier

Coin-op Women Speak Out

I had just peeled off my jacket, slipped off my shoes, and was letting exhaustion have its way with me. Lauran Bromley (Bromley Inc.) plopped down looking quite drained. We began chatting, continuing our conversation from dinner several nights before.

We glanced up and saw Mireille Chevalier (Chevalier International Trading Services) trudging toward the escalator. We couldn't miss the look of lust in her eye when she spotted an empty chair next to us. It didn't take much arm-pulling to convince her to sit a spell. Naturally, with three women who have quite a few years in the industry sitting in one spot, the conversation turned to women in the industry.

As we began talking we looked across from Play Meter's booth and saw Jeanne Ballouz and Darlene Kindler of Fabtek/Irem busy taping boxes to be shipped. We called them over to join in the conversation. But being the dutiful employees—Jeanne said she doesn't want to incur the wrath of her boss (husband Frank)—they agreed to come one at a time to tell their stories, leaving the other to tape and ship boxes.

We all agreed that it is refreshing and maybe a little surprising to see women playing a much bigger part in the industry. We all agreed that as our ranks grow in number, we have been welcomed into the fold. We figure that we'll all be joining the Half Century Club about the same time!

We thought of quite a long list of women that are prominent in the industry, operators like Tami Norberg-Paulsen and Larrianne Simon; distributors like LeeAnn Bullard, Sue Monday, and Linda Fernandez; and manufacturers like Mary Fujihara, Debbie Austin, Leslie Ross, Lenore Sayers, Shelley Sax, Linda Weber, Joyce Kaehler, Sue Jarocki, Natalie Kulig, Anne Hayes, Donna Cristich, Virginia Kauffman, and Linda Benzler. And I have to mention our managing editor Bonnie Theard. I really don't know how we would get along without her. Also, what a credit to women

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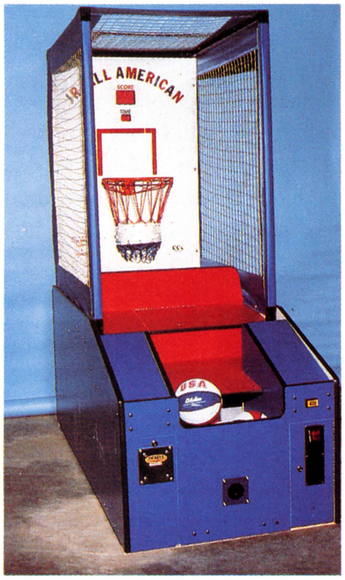
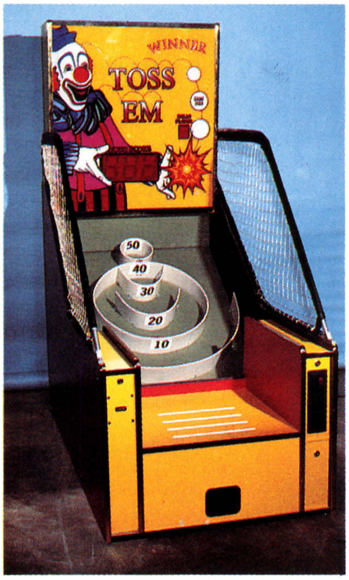


JR. ALL AMERICAN

A pint size version of the ever popular basketball game, Coin Concepts presents the Jr. All American. Dimensions are 84" deep, 33" wide and 78" high. Some game features include digital readouts for time and score, ticket and free play optional settings, and selectable coinage. The heavy duty construction will withstand years of constant use.



TOSS EM

Coin Concepts' exciting new kiddie game that's not just for kids. A game that has no rules for playing! The dimensions of 60" deep, 34" wide and 74" high fit all space conscious locations. Features include a basic game presentation for immediate player recognition, attractive graphics and sound, multiple ticket award levels, winner strobe lights and four coinage levels including free play. An absolute winner.

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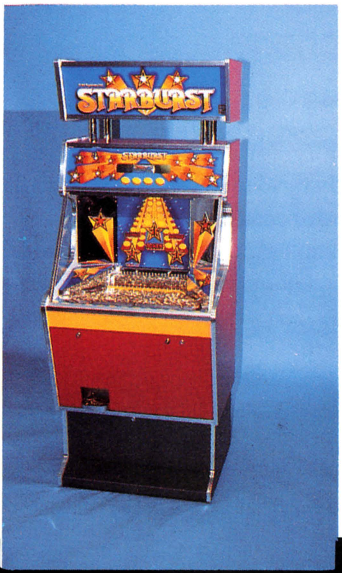
This colorful, eyecatching new one player coin pusher by the KW Systems is loaded with high earning bonus features. Players control the slide coin entry and playfield movement. The flexibility of the features make this game acceptable in most locals. Dimensions are 25" deep, 72-1/2" high and 29" wide. A special sized promotional token issued by an adjustable bonus feature makes Starburst a favorite for the players. Starburst's meters, tilt alarm, ticket and/or token capability, and wider play field design makes the Starburst a favorite for the operators.



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to have Carol Lally as Play Meter's publisher.

I know I've left many, many names out of this brief list and do apologize. I wish we could have had all of them join in our fireside chat—without the fire—but we would have needed to produce a whole issue just for their stories. I hope that you will enjoy reading about our coin-op history and understand how proud we all are to be a part of this business.

LAURAN: What started me on the project of getting some women together was when Valerie and I had dinner together two years ago. It was at a dinner for Louis Boasberg put together by Si Redd's wife Marilyn. We were sitting at this table with some men and their wives. Marilyn really outdid herself on the dinner.

All of a sudden the men, while we are having a course, saw a group at the other table. All of the men at our table and the other table stood up, and all the women stayed seated. I felt like we weren't invited to join them. It got me thinking about women in the industry.

VAL: I get into positions like that a lot. If I'm in a group with husbands and wives, I usually have more in common with the husbands because of my capacity at the magazine. I should be talking to the men, and yet I look over and the wives are shooting daggers at me because I'm talking to their husbands. They aren't understanding that it's the job.

MIREILLE: Women do have to be more careful. Let's face it, if a man is fooling around, no one thinks that much of it. But if a women is, they say things like, "She's selling games with sex."

LAURAN: Well, I guess I'll have to get out the old leather skirt if I want to sell some more games!

VAL: Before we get too far along, let's all tell how we got into the business.

LAURAN: I've been in this industry since I was born. My father and grandfather were both in it. I began getting a salary 11 years ago with Stern Electronics, a company in which my father had an interest. I worked in all of the departments on a training mission. I even did brochures in the stockroom. In fact, I think Larry Siegel put me in the stock room because he thought I would quit. I did that for three months. I also did purchasing for Seeburg (Stern owned it at the time) and quality control on printed circuit boards—we were doing *Scramble* at the time.

I went on the production line and then moved up to marketing and promotion. Then Stern got into severe problems and I left. Actually, I've left the industry twice and came crawling back! About 10 months ago I left Data East, where I was doing purchasing, to work on my own projects. I have my own company called Bromley Inc. My first product had its debut at this show. My U.S. representative is a *man*. However, I did hire a woman associate. She has been quite helpful.

All of my games are non-violent. I'm quite happy and very proud of that. Of course, if I have to sell something, I guess I could add some violence!

"For all the reasons of a start-up situation, I was involved in everything."
—Darlene

VAL: Thanks Lauran. Now let's hear from Darlene or Dar as her better half, Nintendo's Al Stone, calls her.

DAR: Basically, I got involved in the business in Europe with Nintendo. For all the reasons of a start-up situation, I was involved in everything. This was in 1984.

LAURAN: What Darlene was doing in Europe is very important.

DAR: Al and I went to Germany with a lot of Nintendo product with the goal of setting up a distribution network over there. We initially committed to a six-month project that turned into closer to three years. I learned a lot about the business. We were parts; we were personnel; we were president and vice president. We switched all of those hats within hours and days. It was a challenge. Obviously Al had a lot of experience with Nintendo. Although I was limited in the industry, I learned very fast because there wasn't any time for any kind of training program. When I decided in 1987 to come back to U.S. corporate headquarters, it became another start-up project, because there had been no international division at Nintendo. Even though we had set one up in Europe, it was independent. We were basically a customer of Nintendo.

When we came back here, we initially had to go through a start up phase in a corporate structure. I came back for three months and it, again, ended up being more like three years. Now I am with another start up project with Irem, which is about four months old in their American office.

LAURAN: Dar, is your forte in the consumer end of the business?

DAR: Actually, right now, because it is start-up and like the same thing as we had in Europe, I'll wear a lot of different hats. I'll be doing things in consumer and coin-op. And being new we don't have a real definition of what has to be done. We will just be taking it one step at a time.

LAURAN: Kind of crisis management!

DAR: Right! You always want to set up this great strategic, well-defined, and well-operating company. But it usually starts with putting out fires.

Mireille, it's your turn to tell your story. I remember Mireille tromping around Europe when her hair was hitting the floor!

MIREILLE: I started in 1969 as an operator.

LAURAN: You must have been just five years old!

MIREILLE: I had 60 games in an attraction park right outside of Paris. It was very successful.

LAURAN: But how did you get into that? You don't just wake up one day and have games!

MIREILLE: It was just by accident. My mother knew someone that was selling an arcade; I bought the games. I was young and didn't know too much about the value of the games. It turns out that he sold them to me for about four times what they were worth. That was a mistake I won't make again. For three years I operated in this attraction park. In winter the parks are closed in Paris, so I would spend the money I

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VISA

got into this business. I mean, look where you have gotten. I can remember when you sat at a front desk answering phones at Play Meter. Where were you before Play Meter?

VAL: I worked for an insurance agency over in Gulfport, Miss., and came to New Orleans in 1976.

MIREILLE: Maybe I shouldn't have said what year I started! Oh, well. Go on with your story. We aren't going to let you get out of it.

VAL: I had gotten divorced and was dating Russell Cognevich, a boy I had known in high school. In fact, my ex-husband and Russell were very good friends and are still good friends!

MIREILLE: Good. Now we will get into the real dirt!

VAL: Russell had nothing to do with my divorce! He started coming over to the coast where I was living, and I guess we finally fell in love. After a few months, he convinced me to move to New Orleans. However, I didn't know if I would like it, so I was not looking for a job.

A girl named Debbie, who was working for Play Meter, gave a Tupperware party at my house.

LAURAN: Outrageous. I know, you bought one too many of those lock-in-freshness containers!

VAL: If ya'll would stop laughing, I'll tell you the funny part. Debbie came over to deliver the goods and started pouring her heart out. I guess I was the motherly type, even when I was just 26! It seems she and another girl got into a knock-down, drag-out fight, and Debbie swore she wasn't going back. I told her she should go back and stick up for her rights. She did. Ralph Lally, the founder, had fired the other girl.

Well, Debbie couldn't type, so she asked me if I would like to come into the office to do some typing and stuff like that. I met Ralph the next day and explained that I was not looking for a permanent job; he explained that he was not looking to hire someone. Believe me when I tell you I started at the bottom. My first “desk” was the kitchen counter, and I brought my own bar stool from home. I even cut the grass on several occasions!

When I did decide to look for a “real” job, I was offered a choice position with a company closer to my house. When I told Ralph I was considering accepting the offer, he asked me to stay. I did. I was “promoted” to circulation, accounts receivables, collecting; you name it, I probably did it. Sometime later, I happened to write a letter to the editor of our paper, and it was printed. Ralph was impressed and suggested that I begin writing articles for the magazine. In the meantime, I had been coming to shows and meeting people in the industry. Around 1982, after having been at Play Meter about five years, David Pierson was promoted to advertising. Ralph asked me if I would be interested in the position of editorial director. And the rest is history.

DAR: Do you remember your first story?

VAL: Boy, do I ever. My knees were shaking as I began thinking about who I needed to call. The story was on used equipment, and I was going to call Jim Frye of Brady Distributing, Chuck Arnold—with Bally at the time—and Ira Bettelman of C.A. Robinson. These were men I was in awe of! As nervous as I was, if they hadn't been as nice as they were, I think I would have called off my writing career right then and there! But they were great. I consider them very good friends. Now I hope that you have embarrassed me enough. Everyone will know more about me than they ever wanted to.

LAURAN: I can't imagine you being nervous about talking to anyone in this industry! I guess the first time is always the toughest.

VAL: Now that we have explained how we got into the business, I'd like to know if any of you ran into any stumbling blocks at first?

DAR: Trying to get out of the parts department!

In fact, I was trying to get specific and find out exactly what my job was. It wasn't like I had the worst department; I had *all* of the worst departments!

MIREILLE: And I was trying to get out of the credit department! I have an advantage, I think. I was an operator, distributor, and manufacturer. I understand what everyone goes through.

LAURAN: I think that women still have stumbling blocks that men don't have. I went into Data East—one of the times I crawled back—and set up their purchasing department. They hired a purchasing agent that didn't work out, so I covered for them. Then they hired another purchaser to help me, and all of a sudden I was reporting to him.

MIREILLE: The exact same thing happened to me at Atari. As I mentioned, I worked collecting all this money, and as the company grew, they got a director of credit. I reported to this man who arrived at 10:30, took a two- or three-hour lunch, and left at 4:00. It was unbelievable. I continued to do all of the work and he took all of the credit.

LAURAN: Now I'll admit the man they hired was very good; I didn't resent reporting to him. However, they hired someone else and I reported to one guy, then another guy, and then Gary (Stern). They hired someone else. Finally, I realized that I wasn't getting anywhere. There was no upward promotion, especially for women. I get angry when I see women that should be promoted from within these companies and aren't. They are consistently passed over for men.

MIREILLE: I think it is very common for women to be passed over for men.

LAURAN: It's true, but there are exceptions. Darlene's fiance, Al Stone, is wonderful. While we were at dinner the other night, he described her as his right hand. And Gary Stern has babied me through thick and thin. In general, I wish the company leaders would look around. When they get head hunters to fill a position, they should look within. Take Shelly Sax at Data East. Her business card says JOT, Jack of all Trades, and believe me she does do everything. Let's get her promoted to a position where she gets paid what she deserves.

DAR: I am basically a newcomer, but I had a lot of things dumped on me. I learned quick. But I respect Al because he does treat everyone as an individual. I had the double situation of not only being female but being his girlfriend. But he never had any problem with that. He has a lot of respect for whomever is in the position I was in within the company. He doesn't

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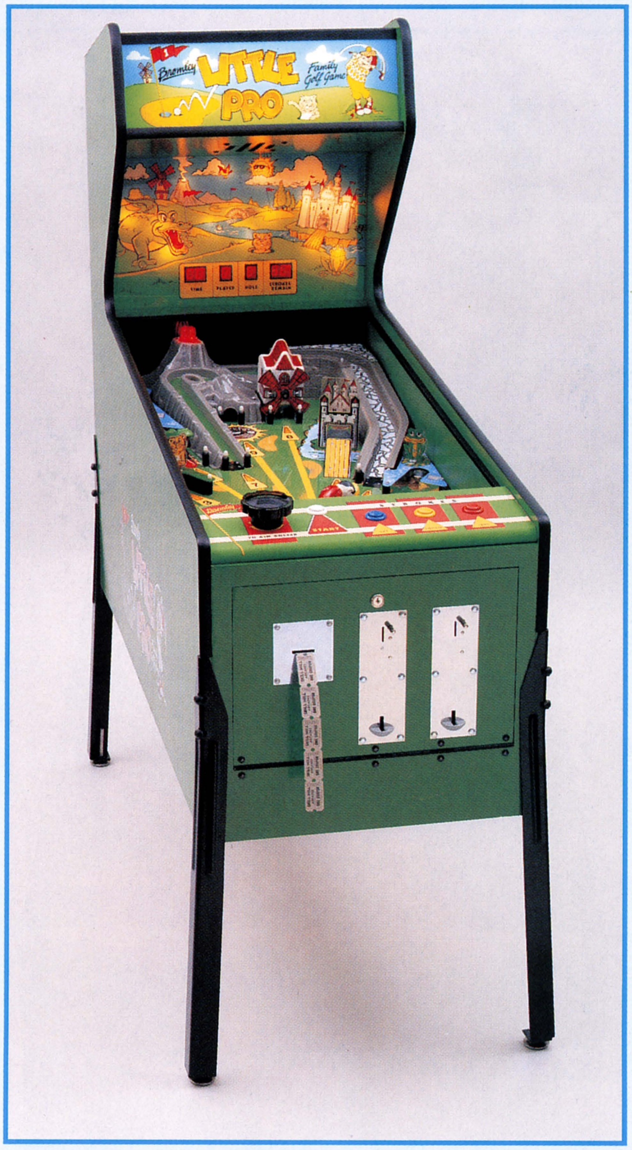

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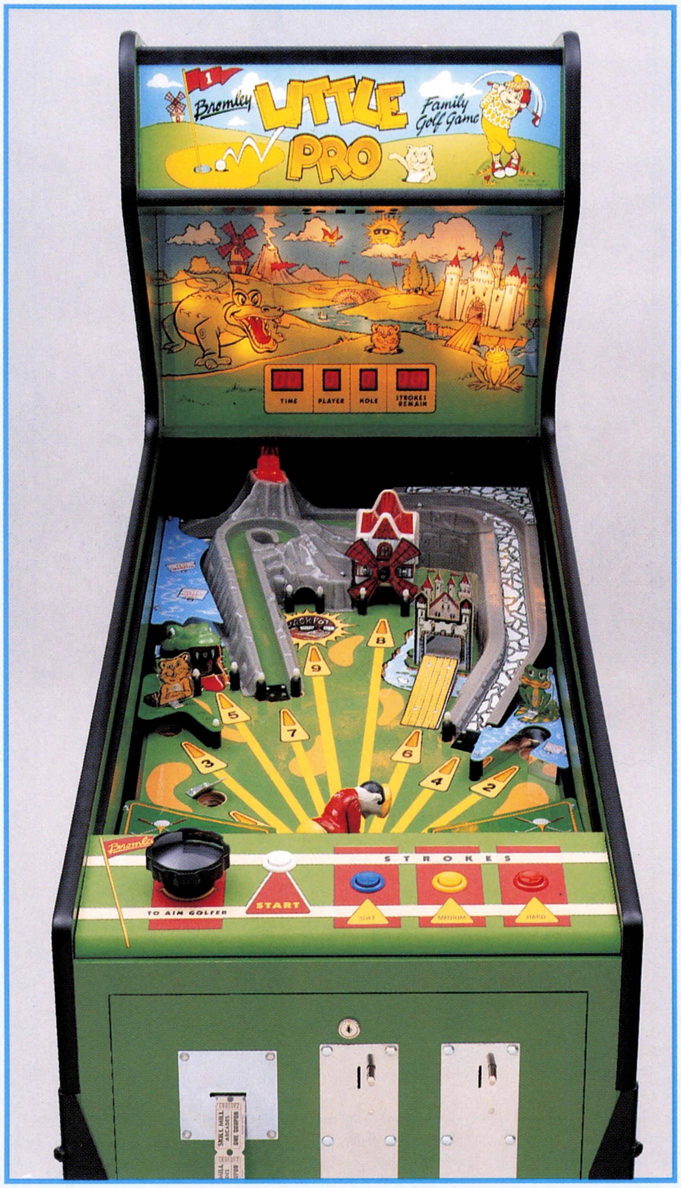
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have an ego problem about acknowledging that person.

VAL: Did people ever resent you because of your relationship with Al?

DAR: If anything, Al is one of those people who will promote me. He would go out of his way to step back two steps and acknowledge my area of expertise. He didn't want to cloud the issue. Initially, I was the person drafted into the position and Al was still more recognizable. It was interesting because Nintendo was not that recognizable in Europe at that time. It was a challenge for Al; we had to accomplish a lot for just two people. It was not a situation where he could give me all the work and take the glory. We both had to roll up our sleeves.

I probably would have stepped back if Al would have let me, because I didn't want anyone to think that I was taking advantage of our relationship to get ahead. In fact, I probably committed 200 percent.

LAURAN: Have you ever noticed that when you see nepotism in a company, they really work three times as hard. My father owned half of Stern and I worked three times as hard to make $12,000 a year. I didn't want anyone to think I was using my father to get ahead.

DAR: That was my attitude at Nintendo in the corporate level. I worked harder because Al and I were related. I had to make myself go the extra 200 percent. Otherwise, Al would look bad. That does become a touchy subject.

MIREILLE: In sales there are not that many of us. Besides Lauran, Jeanne, Darlene, and Lenore, there is Leslie Ross at Williams, Mary Fujihara at Atari, Sue Jarocki at SNK, and a few others.

LAURAN: How many women are in the Half Century Club? None I'm certain. I only have 39 years to go.

DAR: It is a struggle, but I think you have a new respect when you do move up.

DAR (glancing over at her booth): I feel very guilty that I am not packing up those games over there. Since I am working for a small company, I am always conscious of pulling my weight.

LAURAN: What the heck, let the men do it!

VAL: Seriously, Darlene has given us a perfect example of how how our attitudes should be. If we want the respect we deserve for the work we are doing, we can't turn around when it's convenient and say that we shouldn't have to do men's work. Darlene, why don't you go over there and pitch in, but see if Jeanne can tear herself away for a few minutes. Maybe we can get her to tell us the sordid details of her humble industry beginnings.

> ***"There is a lot of support once you are in the door."***
> **—Lauran**

I think we have all found that it's not just dealing within our own companies, but it's dealing with everyone in the industry. Some of the older men still don't think this industry is any place for a woman.

JEANNE: That's right. Call me over when you start talking about older people!

LAURAN: Now we've got Jeanne Ballouz here with us. She should have some interesting stories to tell. Of course, we can't print anything X-rated, Jeanne, so keep it clean!

JEANNE: I think Lauran just mentioned that I am sleeping with the boss! Nepotism of the worst sort. Seriously, most people know that I am little Tommy Petit's older sister and Frank Ballouz's wife. I started at Atari in 1977 when I was about six! I worked through personnel and accounting into data processing.

LAURAN: Looks like we found another one who has been in every department.

JEANNE: I started in consumer, transferred to coin-op, and left in 1981. Frank and I stayed home for a year, traveled, played, and put in a pool. Then he went to work at Nintendo; I went to the tennis courts. Then Frank started Fabtek and pulled me off the tennis courts and into the office. I went dragging my heels, screaming and fighting. Now I love it. I know it was because he knew I could handle the work.

MIREILLE: If anyone takes verbal abuse in this industry, it's Jeanne. When she was working for Atari, Frank was very tough.

JEANNE: But I think it's the same situation as Al and Darlene. I think when you are married and work close with the boss, pay-wise, perks, and benefits-wise, you are always the last one. I remember Frank would bump Lenore up to first class; I would be in coach. It couldn't look like he would do something for me because of our relationship.

MIREILLE: Wait. That's reverse discrimination!

VAL: But there is a point to this. You know that you can do the job, but you feel that someone is going to say, "She got it because of her relationship with the boss."

JEANNE: I have to say that Frank and I have been able to work very well together. More so in our own company because he has enough confidence to know that I will get the job done. But I know the industry. It wasn't like he just decided to get his wife to work. It was like I took a brief hiatus. Surprisingly, most people didn't know that I had ever left because I was always at the shows and with Frank.

VAL: When you started at Atari did you run into any obstacles?

JEANNE: No, I didn't. They called us the "Atari Girls."

MIREILLE: Louis Boasberg was the one who hung that name on us. The "Atari Girls" were Jeanne, Lenore, Elaine Shirley, Mary Fujihara, Linda Butcher, Carol Kantor, and myself.

JEANNE: We were a very visible group of girls because there were so many of us. More so than any other company. You would have to attribute that to Frank because he never had a problem having female managers.

MIREILLE: Back then Atari was a very big family and a very young group.

JEANNE: We were all good friends and have remained so.

LAURAN: I hope that in the future there will be more promotions for women in the industry. If I can hire women I will.

VAL: I think women are their own worst enemies sometimes. I've seen women that resort to crying if all else fails. Or batting their eyelashes at a man and expecting him to crumble at their feet. It is so awful to make great strides and then see some bimbo acting like that.

JEANNE: I think we've all seen those women in action. I think we juggle a lot more with jobs, the house, the kids. Women have learned to juggle it all. Somewhere we also find time to do what we want to do for ourselves. Men couldn't do what we do.

LAURAN: My dad is a perfect example. He has an apartment here in Chicago. I live on my own doing my own thing, but he will call and say, "Doll, the freezer was broken when I was last there. Could you make sure it's fixed?" So there I am waiting all day for the repairman, realizing that I'm $200,000 in the hole. I'm waiting for this guy for $39 per hour! I don't want to do it, dad!

JEANNE: I have to add that Frank is the first one to try to help. He will fix dinner, but he won't clean up!

MIREILLE: What would you think would be against women in the industry?

LAURAN: They have to prove themselves after they've already proven themselves.

JEANNE: Maybe that is true. We have a tough few years getting there. But there is no other industry where women are included more than this one. Take Lenore Sayers. You hear nothing but good about her. She is included in everything. Frank and Bob Fay gave her the credit for the three-for-$100 tickets on the ACME raffle. That was her idea. Mireille, no one could have been more supportive of you than some of the men. When you wanted to do your own thing no one thought you couldn't do it. I didn't have a lot of negative at Atari until Frank and my relationship was formed.

No one had a problem with Jeanne being Tom Petit's sister, who was best friends with Lenore Sayers, who was good friends with Mireille Chevalier, who was really good friends with Don Osborne—you get the point. But there may have been some negative that I inflicted myself. I was hesitant to do things because of my relationship with Frank. Darlene, you probably felt the same way at Nintendo because of Al.

DAR: I think that you and I can relate on that subject matter better than the others, who are not in a relationship with someone they work with very closely.

VAL: But look at it like this. Everyone knew about your relationships. They knew that Jeanne and Frank and Darlene and Al were an "item." There was already a respect there. The rest of us were more on our own, if you want to put it like that.

DAR: That is very true.

LAURAN: Having the same last name as Marty Bromley wasn't always an advantage. People were looking at the name and expecting something more and better than they would have from someone else.

DAR: It's like having famous movie star parents and trying to succeed in the same industry. You have a lot to live up to. It's harder.

If that is what it takes—an extra little smile—do it very happily.

VAL: There are always the women who go way overboard on the women's lib stuff. They make it harder for us sometimes.

JEANNE: Sure they do. I just sewed a button on a coat. I didn't mind doing it. What difference did it make. I happened to be there and did it. I could have said that it wasn't my job, or that I couldn't sew.

LAURAN: That's important because this is definitely not a women's lib thing. It's a chat about women in the business. I would like to say that if I could sew, I would be happy to sew someone's button on their jacket.

JEANNE: The button fell off that same night! Again, I think we are spoiled in this industry because there are so many personal feelings that if you want to succeed, there is so much support for you. I feel on a personal level that the professional part will come behind it. Val, if you set out to start your own magazine, you would have everyone in the world behind you. That you're a woman wouldn't be a factor one way or the other. That you are respected for what you do would be the key.

"Women do have to be more careful." —Mireille

VAL: When I first started traveling a lot, I was one of the only women. The guys would make plans and wouldn't include me. I would be very hurt. Of course, being with the press didn't help because they thought I was always taking notes!

JEANNE: I think that maybe Lenore felt that way sometimes with Don (Osborne), Tom (Petit), and Frank (Ballouz). She might not have been included as she had before. It's that "good ole boy" syndrome.

VAL: One of my very best friends in those days was Mark Struhs. He never hesitated about including me along with the guys. I'll always thank him for doing that.

DAR: But you know with our personalities, we have to be ready to just go! If I want to do something I don't pout anymore.

LAURAN: And there is no doubt that today we are getting stronger.

MIREILLE: It may have taken us longer, and maybe it was a struggle. But it is nice to be recognized and well-accepted. None of us here have any problems anymore.

JEANNE: I had no problem being recognized as a fun lady or known for having a good personality. I didn't mind that because all the time I was paving the way.

LAURAN: There is a lot of support once you are in the door. It's just getting in the door that's a little harder.

VAL: I was always trying to write editorials from a man's point of view. However, I realize that some that were very emotional for me—I thought the guys would laugh and think it was corny—I had more guys calling and saying how wonderful they were! They have such deep feelings, too. They have a hard time because they were brought up to suppress those feelings. I felt like I had really made it the first time someone called up and yelled at me!

LAURAN: Boy is that true. Sometimes you hear things through the grapevine. However, I think there's always a little hesitation to call and scream at a woman!

JEANNE: Come on over to Fabtek. Frank will yell at you all the time! ☐

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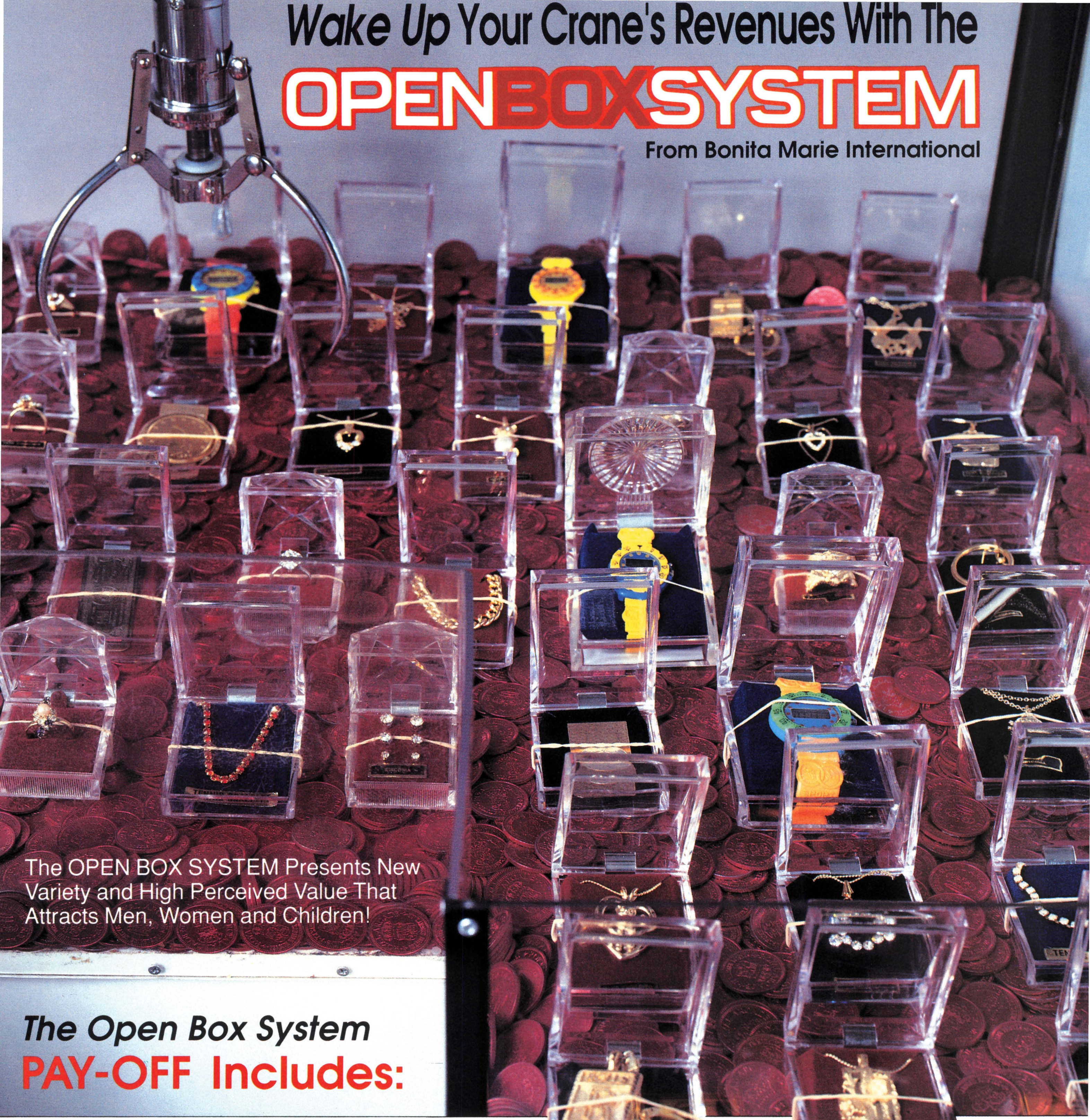

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FAVA stages successful music and games show

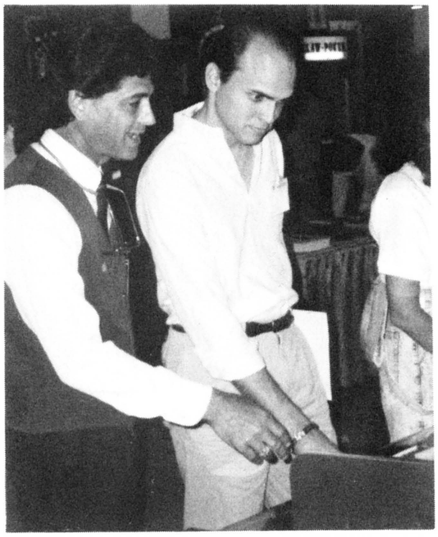
Operators hoping to get "Positioned for the '90s" converged in Orlando, Fla., on April 19-21 for the 26th FAVA Music & Games Convention/Tradeshow. Association coordinator Kathey Fanning says the show, held at the Omni Hotel Expo Center, was one of the best ever, and the numbers back her up.

There were 95 booths sold. Some 400 people associated with the booths—exhibitors, manufacturers' reps, and FAVA associate members—turned out. Finally, not counting the aforementioned 400, close to 650 people attended the show.

It was a typical show in the sense that some manufacturers reported good, brisk sales, while others complained that things were dead. Many operators polled said they were still maintaining a cautious buying attitude toward video games, due to an unsure market. Only the best video product was considered.

Williams Electronics unveiled two post-ACME pieces: a pin named *Rollergames* and the video follow-up to *NARC*, *Smash TV*. The Steve Ritchie-designed *Rollergames* represents a first for Williams, in that the playfield features advertising logos from such companies as Pepsi, Slice, Mug Root Beer, Thermos, and Share Data. Operators had many favorable comments about the pin, which has proven popular among women at test locations, Ritchie said.

Jerry Lozano (l) and Mike Silverstein (r) of P.M.I. Toys & Novelties with Angie Ledesma and Bob Demner of McSugar's.



GaMCO International's Ron Yaffe (l) shows Chuck [illegible] of Putt-Putt Golf & Games in Tampa the latest model of *Action Lotto*.

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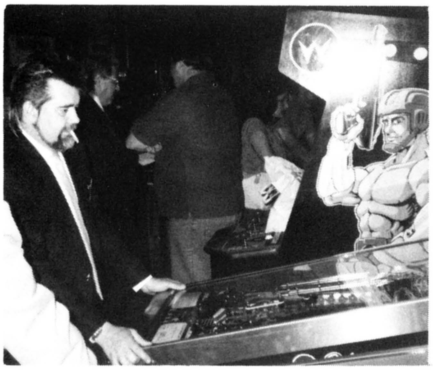
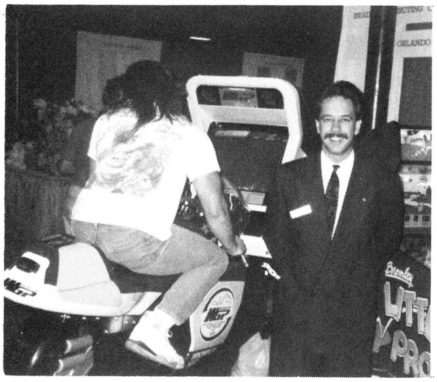
Jackie and John Sullivan with an assortment of plush at the Laramie Interests booth.



Williams' pinball game designer Steve Ritchie plays his latest creation, *Rollergames*.

Rowe International's Joel Friedman (l) with Al Toranto of Birmingham Vending in front of Rowe's *LaserStar* jukebox.



Jim Chapman of Taito America stands beside a would-be motorcycle racer on *WGP*.

SNK's Rachel Davies explains the finer points of the company's *Neo-Geo* system to Jay Iocovozzi of Amusement Pro's.

Smash TV has a futuristic game show setting. Contestants are challenged to not only win cash and prizes; they must also enter enclosed arenas to battle drones, mutants, and a fearsome ''Mr. Big''-type enemy. One Williams representative called *Smash TV* a combination of *NARC* and *Robotron*.

Other new product not seen at ACME included Merit Industries' *Regal Darts* and a new *Action Lotto* model from GaMCO International.

Forty FAVA members attended the Saturday morning business meeting—the most ever. They were updated on legislation pending that could harm the Florida coin-op industry. Fourteen bills have been proposed that would adversely affect the industry; most target cigarette vending with tax increases.

AMOA president Jack Kerner praised the operators in attendance, saying that it takes such involvement to protect their business interests. ''AMOA will fight your battles on a national level, but we can't do it on a local level,'' Kerner said. ''You should be active, working members of FAVA, not just a member who goes to functions to eat and drink. Remember, this association is an insurance policy for your business.''

The most recent tally shows that FAVA has 245 member companies.

It was also announced that law student Karen Smith was Florida's AMOA Wayne Hesch scholarship award winner. Twenty-one such educational scholarships have already been given by AMOA. Kerner said it is AMOA's goal to one day have a scholarship awarded yearly to a student from each of the 50 states.

The most important business transacted at the meeting, however, was the election of a new executive committee. Bill Miller of WGM Amusements is the new president, replacing Anthony Falcigno of Collier County Games. The others elected were Ed Tolisano of Madeira Beach Fun Center, first vice president; Mike Dodson of Lawson Music Co., second vice president; and Rick Johnson of All Brands Vending, secretary/treasurer. □

Flanking Merit Industries' new *Regal Darts*, (l-r): Bob Whitehead of Merit, Bunny Celenza of King's Row Ltd., and Mort Ansky of Merit.

Ed Chermak of Chermak Vending & Distributing (l) and Steve Piantieri of Charles Music Co. compete with this youngster on Konami's *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles*.

Jon Brady (c) of Brady Distributing with Pioneer's Jerry Sheaks (l) and Dave Drouillard. They are standing beside the *Laser CD* jukebox.

Checking out Premier's *Silver Slugger* pin are, (l-r): Marty Man Smith of Greater Southern Distributing, Art Jusko of Putt-Putt Golf & Games in Tallahassee, and Ken Cromartie of Putt-Putt Golf & Games in Jacksonville.

Looking for fun in all the right places

Tucked away in a quiet Chicago suburb is a company that's been making a lot of noise in the game industry. While the company's name isn't yet a household word, its games are well-know to the coin-op industry. And the folks that make up the company are doing everything they can to keep the industry strong.

The company is Incredible Technologies, Inc. (IT), the talent behind *Capcom Bowling* ,Grand Products' *Slick Shot, Strata's Golden Tee Golf*, and GameTek's *Wheel of Fortune*.

IT is also the company that produced the programming, music, and sound effects for Data East's successful lineup of pinball games: *Phantom of the Opera, Monday Night Football, Time Machine, Playboy, Torpedo Run, Secret Service*, and *Laser War*.

The history behind IT is a good old American success story that started in 1985 with three people—husband and wife Richard and Elaine Ditton and friend David Thiel—working on a project-by-project basis out of their homes.

All three had considerable industry experience with companies like Marvin Glass and Gottlieb/Mylstar. After they joined forces as Incredible Technologies, the company of three doubled its growth each year and is now up to 50 employees.

According to Elaine Ditton, president of IT, "What's special about our people is

The steering committee, (front row, l-r): David Thiel, Elaine Ditton, and Richard Ditton. (Back row, l-r): Larry Hodgson, Scott Morrison, and Michael Hanson.

IT's team of talented artists.

that so many of them had five or mor year's experience in companies like Rock-Ola, Bally/Midway, Williams, and Cinematronics before we hired them. Just like Richard, David, and me, they worked through and survived the early 1980s when video games were considered a fad. Now we're all determined to create game products that will keep this area of entertainment growing and thriving.''

> *''The company of three doubled its growth each year and is now up to 50 employees.''*

IT's employees keep their minds open as to what makes a game fun to play. If that means spending hours of their own time in arcades playing games and checking out customers' reactions, that's what IT's staff is going to do.

''I guess people in the game industry who do the actual game development are a different breed,'' noted Elaine. ''For one thing, we've never forgotten how to be like kids—how to really get involved in games and fun!''

Although she considered a career as an artist, Elaine discovered she had a strong aptitude for working with computers. ''When I got involved with computers, I found that computer people know how to have fun,'' she noted. ''They don't take themselves too seriously, even though they are some of the hardest working people I've ever known. Computers were responsible for my meeting Richard. He encouraged me to learn to program, which led to programming games.''

Elaine has strong feelings about what it takes to amuse and entertain children. ''I don't think that children need a lot of expensive, elaborate toys. But they benefit from toys or games that challenge and surprise them and demand some level of creative thinking,'' she explained.

IT tries to build these surprises and some level of creative player control into all the games it develops. ''And if this approach works for game players, it's probably good for game developers, too,'' she added.

Because of Elaine's beliefs, IT is committed to creating a work environment that allows people to have fun while they're being creative. That's why IT staff can often be found working around the clock to create games that have something extra, whether it's innovative, fast-paced gameplay or attention-getting music and sounds.

And while the company's growth has been fast, the Dittons work hard to keep the company's personality as friendly and creative as it was when there were only a handful of employees.

''One of the reasons why Richard and I wanted to start our own company,'' says Elaine, ''was to avoid the things that we

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didn't like in bigger companies, like the formality that makes it difficult for an employee to get his or her ideas heard by management.''

But fun is the most important thing. Richard, IT's vice president, agrees with is wife. ''If you can't have fun doing what you have to do for a living, what's the point? And in this industry, who is better qualified to develop and produce games than people who really know how to have fun.''

> ***''Our challenge is to make sure that games play well, provide a high level of fun, and earn well.''***

This attitude carries over into everything the company does, including their group outings. Elaine laughs as she remembers one company picnic held at one of the employee's homes. ''Little did this person know that a water balloon fight would move *into* her house!''

STRATA
INCREDIBLE
TECHNOLOGIES

John Cassiday (r), vice president of marketing for Strata, with IT's Larry Steffens.

Richard recalls, ''Everyone left that party soaking wet, but very happy! This year we will celebrate our fifth anniversary. We've already decided that this year's picnic will be held outside in a public park.''

David Thiel, IT's director of interactive sound, says, ''Despite the company's fast growth, Elaine and Richard have managed to keep a warm, family feeling at IT. And part of that feeling is based on respect for each employee's talents and skills. Because of this, there's a lot of quality product that gets produced on a timely basis. All these things make this company truly an incredible place to work.''

Elaine adds, ''Everyone here is dedicated to creating games that we'd like to play ourselves, so we all try to go that extra mile to make our games look good, sound good, and play great.''

Richard points out that IT's success is based on team effort. ''By letting everyone speak up and share their ideas about games, we all benefit. And because our employees are so close to what's happening in arcades, we know their ideas are valid,'' he says.

In looking back over the history of the game industry, Richard believes one of the biggest lessons game companies should have learned by now is to get back to the basics. ''Back in the early '80s,'' says Richard, ''the industry fell into a technology trap. Everyone thought that more movement on the screen and better graphics meant better games. But that isn't necessarily true.''

He says, ''People are not putting their coins into the machine in order to get a dramatic technological display. They just want to have a good time. Our challenge is to make sure that games play well, provide

The staff has grown from three to 50 in five years.

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a high level of fun, and earn well.''

However, IT is dedicated to using new technologies in order to enhance game play. For example, sounds and music are areas that in the past were downplayed by some designers because no one realized how sound could make the game play more understandable and exciting.

''I don't think that children need a lot of expensive, elaborate toys.''

An example is Strata's *Golden Tee Golf*. Each player has a special tune that plays while the golf course scenery is being drawn on the screen. This is a cue for that player to get ready to make a shot. In other games, like pinballs, music indicates when the player has reached a new, higher level of game play.

IT is also committed to producing games at lower cost. ''If we can lower the cost of manufacturing games and then sell more of them at a lower price, everyone in the game industry will profit,'' says Richard. ''IT is continually looking for ways to keep costs in line, both for us as developers and for distributors and operators.'' ''To sum up,'' says Elaine, ''IT wants to keep producing great games that are inexpensive to make and sell and that have long-term popularity. Considering the number of talented people we have working here and quality of product we've already built a reputation for, we're looking forward to many years of contributing to the game industry.'' ☐

David Thiel (l), director of interactive sound, with art director Tim Skelly.

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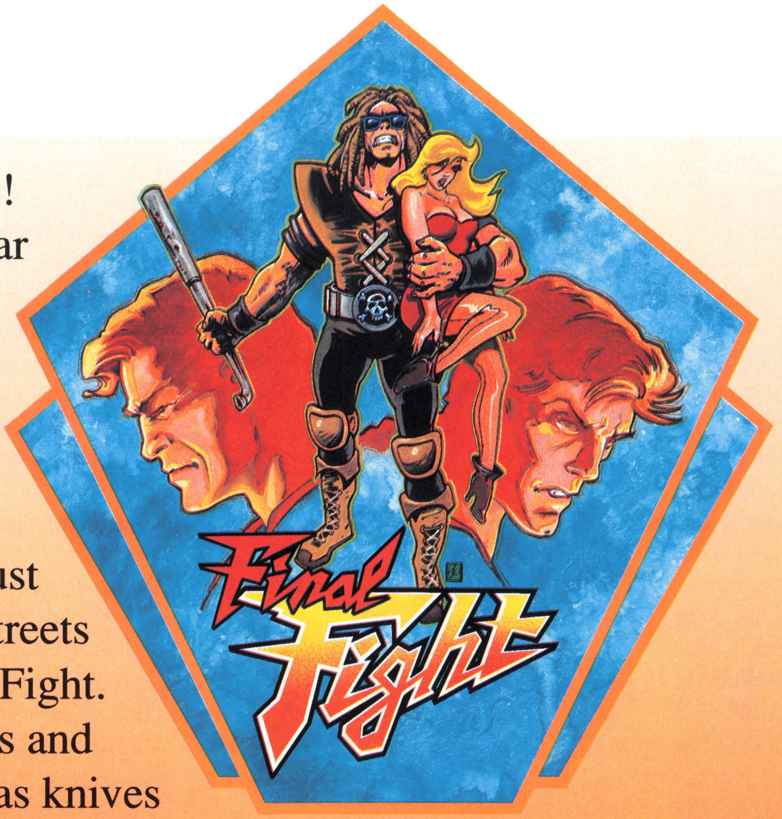

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In quest of the Valley Cup

Nineteen qualifiers from 14 states battled for dart supremacy in the 4th Annual Valley Cup World Championships, staged by Valley Recreation Products on March 23-24. The event was held at the Omni Hotel in Orlando, Fla.

Four players—two men and two women—who won the rights to compete in Florida via their local qualifying were flown there by Valley. The company also paid for hotel lodging, a welcoming party, and the awards banquet. Also, upon arrival, each player was presented a "Cougar Dart" shirt with the city, state, and Valley operator's company name.

A modified round-robin was used for the competition. In the men's and women's division, eight players within the bracket played 301 Double In/Double Out, 501 Double Out, and Cricket. The player with the most total wins in his or her bracket advanced to Phase II of the tournament.

The four winners of Phase I in each division, men's and women's, competed in a similar Phase II round-robin format to see who would comprise Team USA. Representing the United States in Phase III were Jimmy Damore, Brad Halley, Jacki Ross, and Patti Carson. Teams from Germany (last year's winners), Austria, and Japan joined the United States in the final Phase III, international competition.

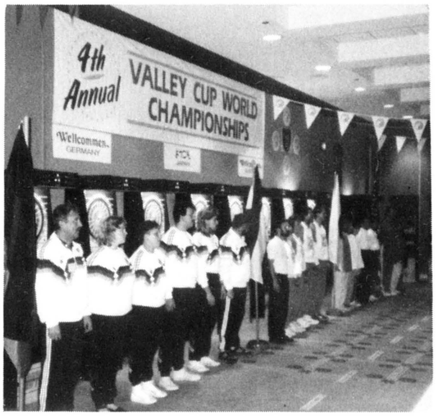
Team USA, (l-r): Patti Carson, Jimmy Damore, Jacki Ross, and Brad Halley.

The results of the championships were as follows: Team USA: 36 wins; Team Germany: 29 wins; Team Austria: 19 wins: Team Japan: 12 wins. By re-gaining the Valley Cup, members of Team USA won a trip to Germany in the fall. They will visit the cities of Frankfurt, Bingen, Wiesbaden, Mainz, and Heidelberg, playing friendly matches among local players while there.

Valley president Chuck Milhem announced that next year's event will be held in Austria. It's going to be hosted by NSM/Loewen and Fun World. □

Team Japan, the fourth place finishers in the Valley Cup.

Members of Team Germany take a break from the competition.



The teams lined up before the beginning of the finals.

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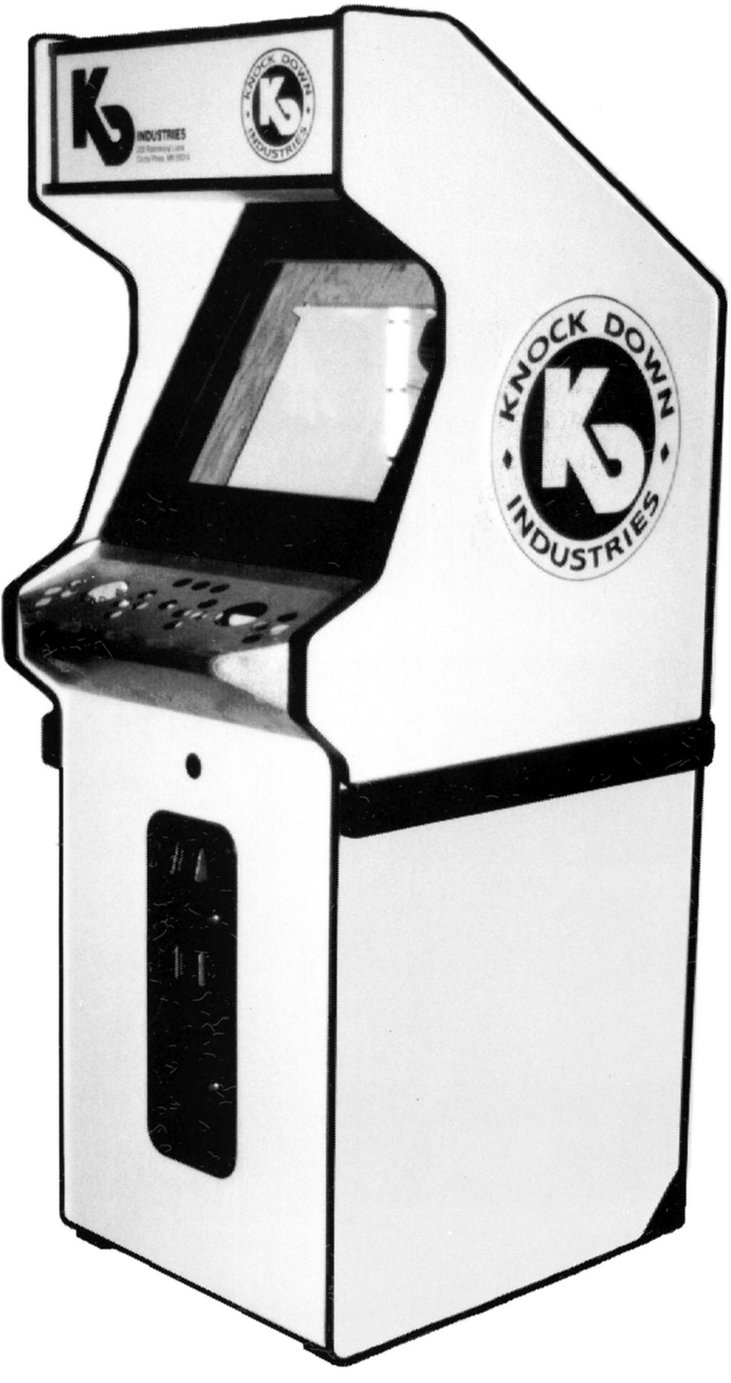

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Playfair co-sponsors two St. Patty's Day tourneys

Playfair Shuffleboard Co., along with Beef's Tavern in Kendallville, Ind., and WOWO Radio 1190, co-sponsored two tabletop shuffleboard promotions during the St. Patrick's Day holiday, March 15-18.

The first event, hosted by Playfair and Beef's Tavern, featured top regional players in an open doubles event. Sixteen teams participated in the double-elimination tournament. They played on a 22-foot Playfair *Grand Master* shuffleboard table.

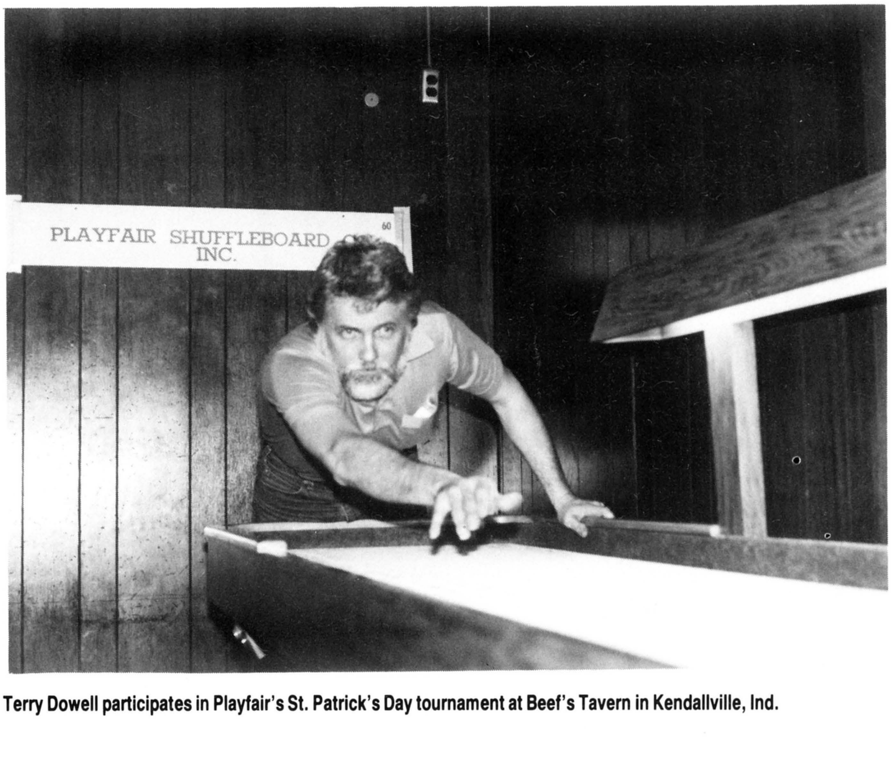
Winners of the tournament were as follows: 1st place: Larry Huffer of Albion, Ind., and Mark Chambers of Goshen, Ind.; 2nd place: Jim DeWitt and Jerry Warr of Anderson, Ind.; 3rd place: Bob and Deb Vorhees of Fairmount, Ind.; 4th place: Jerry Seibert of Lansing, Mich., and Bill Bowers of Mishawaka, Ind.

''We had turn-away crowds; play was excellent and competition was great,'' said Margie Camp, co-owner of Beef's. ''We were lucky enough to see real Midwestern pros in action. Shuffleboard is the game of the '90s. We're thrilled to help spread the word.''

The second promotion was part of the annual Sports, Vacation and Boat Show at the Allen County War Memorial Coliseum in Fort Wayne, Ind. In cooperation with Radio 1190, Playfair hosted an open competition ''Shuffleboard Shootout.'' The four-day event began with three days of qualification. Totals were recorded throughout the weekend, and the top 12 scorers in the preliminary phase took part in a playoff on March 18.

''We're always looking for ways to introduce people to the excitement and challenge of tabletop shuffleboard,'' said Playfair president Brian Crowl. ''The Shuffleboard Shootout was a terrific showcase. We're pleased to have been a part of this superb recreation open house.''

For more information about Playfair Shuffleboard, its products, or the Playfair Shuffleboard video, contact Brian Crowl, Playfair Shuffleboard Co. Inc., 7021 Bluffton Road, Fort Wayne, IN 46819; (800) 541-3743; FAX (219) 747-0470. □



Terry Dowell participates in Playfair's St. Patrick's Day tournament at Beef's Tavern in Kendallville, Ind.

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READER'S RESPONSE

OPERATORS: This column is devoted to you. It is your chance to have your voice heard on the state of the industry. We welcome all complaints, compliments, and comments. We will print your letters as received, when possible. We would appreciate it if you would refrain from sending a scathing letter about a specific manufacturer. Instead, we would like your general observations on the industry. Your name will not be used if you prefer. Take a few moments to share your thoughts with the rest of the coin-operated entertainment industry. There is a self-addressed sheet waiting for you to fill out and return to us.

New games

I'd like to compliment the staff of Play Meter for the highly informative and helpful publication they put out every month. The service it provides our industry is invaluable, especially to the small operator. I especially appreciated your coverage of the ACME show, as I was unable to attend. I have one suggestion that I would like for you to consider. I think a "New Equipment Poll," similar to your monthly "Equipment Poll," printed just after the ACME and AMOA shows would be a godsend. We all know that operator's reactions and comments about the show are important; everyone is always asking each other, "What do you think about that new XYZ kit?" and so on.

If you could provide operators with a list of all the new pieces at the show, possibly on the last day of the show or even in the next issue, then let them rank their reaction to each one on a scale of one to 10 and publish the results, I think we could all benefit from it. Such a list would serve as a helpful guide in choosing what to buy and what not to buy, rather than going with the old "wait and see how it does" method, where a new piece may lose some of its appeal by the time we see that it's a winner and decide to add it to our route. It might also help steer us away from those pieces we think are so "hot" and then end up laying an egg in the cashbox.

It would certainly be better than just going with one's "gut reaction" and hoping things turn out well. I know this won't guarantee the success or failure of a game, but I'm sure that with the price of new equipment these days, operators need all the help they can get.

Rye, New York

Where's the parts?

I have a complaint about manufacturers that run out of parts for specific games. If they made the games in the first place, then where are the parts when you need them? After 10 phone calls you might find what you are looking for. Of course, there is always the alternative of taking a hacksaw to make it fit.

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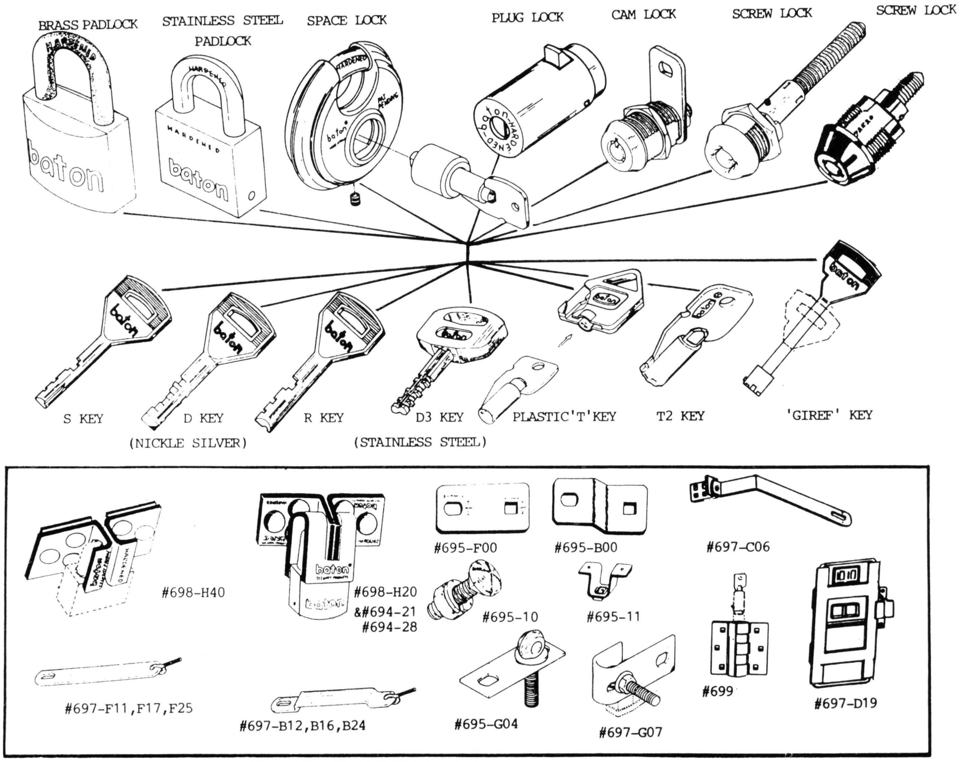

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Valerie Cognevich

In a school daze

Ever since the first game didn't function properly, there has been a need for someone to make it work. Think of the very first *Bagatelle* games in the 1700s. Maybe the worst thing that ever happened was one player conked the competition over the head with the stick used to hit the marbles. No need for a technician there.

Not so today. From video games to pinball machines, extensive training is necessary to delve into the source of trouble. Considering the number of people signing up for the technical seminars at ACME, it's clear that there are always technicians wanting to learn a few more hints to help them do the best possible job.

But what about those who need to know months before ACME? There are some good choices within the industry to get you started.

We spoke with two of the most well-known names in technical instruction, Randy Fromm and Jim Calore. Randy, of course, has been a technical writer for Play Meter for many, many years. He was also recruited to head-up the technical seminars at Play Meter's AOE shows, starting in 1980. Randy is now the featured technical seminar speaker at ACME. He runs Randy Fromm's Arcade School, which operates schools in various parts of the country—many times right before or after AMOA or ACME.

Jim Calore is the publisher of StarTech Journal, a service newsletter geared toward the coin machine business. Jim has recently begun hosting service schools at various distributorships around the country. The instructors are Jim Beck of Greater Southern Distributing and Sam Cross of Godwin Distributing, both contributors to StarTech.

What to know

The most important thing you must do is decide what your goals are going to be. For example, are you planning to do field service on location? You may need to be expert in determining problems and fixing them on the spot. Or do you want to excel in shop repair, where the piece comes in from the location for repair?

Randy Fromm's Arcade School

Most operators are already familiar with Randy Fromm through his technical articles and seminars. An 18-year veteran of the coin-op business, Randy has been teaching his Arcade School since 1980.

"I started the school in response to requests from operators and mechanics, who had read my articles in Play Meter and were looking for some type of technical training," he said. "At the time, there was literally no school for game technicians."

The school is geared for coin-op service people who are familiar with working on games but do not know how to perform the electronic repairs. No previous knowledge of electronics is required to attend the school, according to Fromm.

Randy starts by covering basic electronics (there's no math or heavy theory; the practical side of repair is stressed) and using the digital multimeter. Students then advance through a look at semiconductors (diodes, transistors, etc.), power supplies, pinball repair, and video game monitor repair. Video game conversions are also covered during the six-day course.

"The Arcade School is revised and updated as the games evolve," Randy explained. "For instance, last year's class was just five days, but I have added an extra day to the current class. I really need six full days to adequately cover all of the material.

"We spend about a third of the class time testing components and repairing power supplies and monitors," Randy said. "It's really pretty easy to repair most monitor and power supply problems once someone shows you what to look for and lets you try to do it yourself."

Star*Tech Journal's technical seminars

Jim's school differs from Randy's; it's for advanced technicians interested in learning to perform in-depth repair on logic boards. This two-day seminar is held at distributorships across the country. Jim said, "These classes are co-sponsored by the distributor, who usually provides lunch. They use it as a marketing tool. When Birmingham Vending opened in Florida, they used the school as a way to get operators to come to their showroom."

Jim started teaching classes 11 years ago. He had this to say about why he started this new project: "No one was addressing the advanced technicians. These classes are condensed to two days, and we touch on no basics. Operators must have a basic electronics background and should be performing service in the coin-op industry. We emphasize these requirements in our information package."

Jim explained that the first day is devoted to theory; the second day is for hands-on lab work. However, he adapts as he goes along. "In one area, like Florida, the operators may want symptoms and solutions, so we will concentrate on that," Jim concluded. "In a northern city, they may want more on circuits and logic boards. We'll give them that."

What to ask

Summing up what Randy and Jim have said, here are some questions you may want to ask if you are planning to attend a school:

- What is the cost?
- Who are the instructors?
- What are the qualifications of the instructors?
- What experience must you have to attend?
- Does it have "hands-on" sessions?
- Where will the classes be held?
- Is the course guaranteed in any way?
- Is it approved by AMOA or any state associations?
- What type of handouts or textbooks are issued to the students? Are they included in the price of the class? □

Denise Osburn

Do your customers know how to act?

If you are like most game room operators, you are very conscious about the image of your location. The family amusement center has sometimes suffered from the "old pool hall" image of a place where juvenile delinquents hang out and cause trouble. Because of this public perception, it is important to create an atmosphere that fosters clean fun and recreation.

This is sometimes easier said than done, considering that the majority of patrons in a game room tend to be on the young side. On one hand, you don't want to impose a lot of rules and orders. After all, you want your game room to be known for fun as well as recreation. But on the other hand, you want a game room that is fun for people of all ages, which means curtailing the activities of a boisterous few. How do you keep your game room a "fun" place and still keep control?

The first step is to establish a clear conduct policy. Determine what behavior is acceptable and what is not. Next, you need to let the patrons know what these rules are. Finally, you have to follow through and see that they are enforced.

Rules of conduct

There are basically four types of rules: those concerning maintenance, legal matters, respect toward games, and respect toward others. Examples of maintenance rules are no smoking, eating, or drinking in the games room. Some arcades may also have regulations on proper attire, restricting gum and tobacco chewing, and loitering.

Legal rules concern more serious matters such as truancy, intoxication, and drug use. Bill Beckham, co-owner of Red Baron Family Fun Center in Toledo, Ohio, has a strict anti-truancy policy. "We have a sign posted in the game room saying that we cooperate fully with the Ohio Board of Education, and that underage children will not be allowed in the game room during school hours. And we enforce it," he said.

Rules should also reinforce respect toward others and toward the games. Archie Roseman, manager of Aladdin's Castle in St. Louis, Mo., has a sign posted which clearly states, "No beating on games." Jesus Acosta, manager of Jolly Time Inc., in Bowling Green, Ohio, has a similar rule, although he does not have it posted. "Most kids treat the games well. They don't want to break them because they want to keep playing them. I do have trouble with one game, the sit-down version of *Hang-On*. Every three or four months, I'm replacing the brake or accelerator cable because some kid has become angry with the game," he explained.

Rules which enforce respecting other patrons make sure that everyone has fun. No hitting or fighting are obvious respect rules. Some arcades even have rules limiting the number of plays on the most popular games so that all patrons have a chance to play.

Let patrons know the rules

Once you have a written policy on conduct, you need to make sure that your customers know those rules. Posting one or two signs which list rules of conduct is a good idea, but too many warning signs can turn off young kids, especially teenagers. Some rules can be assumed—no marijuana smoking, don't shoot other players—but others should not be assumed. Post maintenance rules—shoes and shirts required, no smoking, etc.—on or near the entrance and other rules in visible areas of the game room.

You may wish to have a sign explaining your conduct policy in-full, posted on the door to the manager's office, but keep the signs in the game room clear and simple. For example, "Truancy will not be tolerated," is a clear and understandable warning that should be posted somewhere in the game room. On your door sign, you may want to expand on this with specifics—no one under 16 years of age permitted in game room before 2:30 p.m. on school days.

If you establish a new rule or policy, you might want to explain it more fully to regular patrons. For example, you may tell them that because a certain game is so popular, you've set a three-play limit on it. You may tell them that they can return to it later, after the others have had a chance to play.

Enforcing rules

One of the first steps to enforcing rules is to have attendants that can handle the job. Be very cautious in hiring a teenager if he is to have to enforce rules. Other teens probably won't take him seriously. It's far better to hire someone that kids will look upon as an authority figure. After all, if they go to school with someone during the day, they are unlikely to treat him with the respect he deserves at night in your game room.

The key to enforcing rules without losing customers is consistency and respect. Be sure that all attendants follow the same procedure and treat all patrons equally. Acosta explains, "We have a policy of 'cheerful reminding.' Treat all patrons with respect, even if they are children."

Don't assume that the teen is being belligerent or delinquent if he lights up a cigarette. Acosta says, "Walk up with a smile, keep a cheerful attitude, and say something like 'Excuse me sir (or ma'am) we don't allow smoking...' Usually they will apologize and put it out."

Warning signs, if too numerous, will be ignored, especially if the game room is familiar. Therefore, verbal reminders are frequently necessary. If someone ignores your sign and walks into the game room carrying a soft drink or ice cream cone, a polite "I'm sorry, eating (drinking) is not permitted. Would you please finish your food outside?" is usually sufficient.

Of course, it's not always that easy. If you have a customer that continues to disregard your conduct policy after repeated warnings, more serious steps need to be taken. "If they persist," cautions Acosta, "I take them aside to talk. I tell them that I will call mall security if they continue." Threatening to call upon a higher authority—mall security or local police—will often improve behavior. However, be sure that you don't develop a reputation for making empty threats. If the customer continues the unacceptable behavior and you don't follow through and call security, the next time your threat will be ignored.

Another approach to the delinquent or intentionally disruptive youth is to ban him from the game room. Beckham's policy is to give two verbal warnings before asking the person to leave. "If we ask them to leave, it is for a period of 30 days. After that, they can come back if they behave. If we have to ask them to leave again, it's permanent."

Beckham feels that removing troublemakers is an effective method of control. "Usually, it is a core group that causes all of the problems. If you get rid of that group, or even two or three of the group, things calm down," Beckham explains. He added that this is a phenomena that he's noticed at all of his game room locations. "Sometimes it may be over a couple of years that the same group causes problems. The quicker you get rid of the core group, the better."

Roseman feels that mall security is a definite advantage to an indoor mall location. "I know in strip locations, they sometimes have a problem with intoxicated older teens, but not so much inside the mall," he says. He added that strip or free-standing locations should hire private security patrols or call on the police if a youth's behavior becomes unmanageable. Acosta agrees, "There should be an understanding that managers have rights. You can defend the store and protect yourself. The police can be called upon."

Acosta also believes that problems with delinquent-type youths can be prevented if the showroom is kept well-maintained and well-lit. "Some say that video games attract a negative type of people, but there are a lot of good kids who play the games for fun." He adds that the atmosphere of the location is more conducive to delinquent behavior than video games.

Improved image

Enforcing rules of conduct is important in creating a clean image for the game room. Keeping control insures the safety and enjoyment of patrons and employees alike. And it also fosters a better image for the video game industry. ☐

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Depreciation, Social Security, and more

Once upon a time, there was a presidential candidate who said, "Read my lips—no new taxes." That same candidate promised not to raise taxes. Enough of fairy tales. Let's look at the real world.

The end of 1989 saw a sad goodbye to the maximum earnings figure of $45,000 for the Social Security tax that was taxed at 7.51 percent for a total hit to the employee of $3,380. The employer got socked for the same amount. Hello 1990! It started with a boosted top earning figure of $48,000 taxed at the same 7.51 percent rate. That meant $3,605 for employee and employer alike.

The New Year's celebrations had hardly died down before a new law kicked the Social Security tax even higher. At this writing, maximum earnings to be taxed, starting back on Jan. 1, 1990, have skyrocketed to $51,000. The rate has inched up to 7.65 percent. Multiplied out, high-earning employees will have to cough up $3,924 in 1990; and the same for the employer—a total take of $7,848 for the IRS for one wage-earner taxpayer. Compare that to the top figure of $6,006 in 1986. Ridiculous!

Are you self-employed? Your self-employment tax will cost you $7,849 for 1990, based on the $51,300 ceiling at a 15.30 percent rate. That's up from $5,166 in 1986. Unbelievable!

OK, there have been no new taxes, and income rates have been frozen for three years. Good. But increasing Social Security taxes at this unrealistic pace hurts every taxpayer, whether an employee or an employer. It's time to write to your representatives and your senators.

Valuing your closely held business

What's your most valuable asset? If you own a successful business, my consulting experience helping closely held business owners save taxes shows that nine times out of 10 your business is the most valuable asset.

A recent valuation case is important to every owner of a closely held business. First, the result. The court held that non-voting stock was worth less than voting stock (TMC 1989-231, Docket No. 28151-85). Now, a little background. Clara Winkler died in 1981, leaving stock in a closely held business to her children. Some of the stock was voting, some non-voting. The estate valued all the shares at $20 per share. The IRS wanted to boost the value to $45.94 for the voting stock and $41.77 for the non-voting stock. Notice that even the IRS was opting for a lower value (about 10 percent) for the non-voting stock.

The tax court compromised in a very interesting way, and valued the voting stock at $37.86 per share (closer to the IRS's figure) and the non-voting stock at $25.24 per share (very close to the estate's figure). Now, make sure you keep your eye on the ball—both the IRS and the court agreed on one thing: the non-voting stock had a lower value than the voting stock.

Why is this case so important? Because every owner of a closely held corporation who wants to transfer his business to his children can take advantage of this decision. Here's how. Step one: Recapitalize your corporation by turning in all of your voting common stock and exchanging it for new voting common stock (say 1,000 shares) and new non-voting common stock (say 9,000 shares). This transaction is tax-free and works for S-corporations as well as taxpaying corporations.

Step two: Give the non-voting stock to your children. Since it's worth less than the voting stock, you can give more shares without owing any gift tax.

What you should know about depreciation

The word "depreciation" has a special meaning for tax purposes. It is simply the amount of the cost of a fixed asset that can be deducted each year until the entire cost of the fixed asset has been deducted.

This article answers the most common questions asked about depreciation. No, land cannot be depreciated. But all other fixed assets are entitled to be depreciated. The number of years over which an asset can be written off depends on the class of property. The rules are the same for new or used property.

> ***"The New Year's celebrations had hardly died down before a new law kicked the Social Security tax even higher."***

At right are the important classes, together with the years to write off and the property covered:

Class	Property covered
5-year	• Most vehicles—autos, trucks, buses, and non-commercial airplanes • Computers and peripheral equipment • Data handling equipment—typewriters, calculators, adding machines, and copiers • Construction equipment
7-year	• Office furniture—desks, files, safes, and fixtures • Equipment (including communications equipment) • Recreation—assets used in bowling centers, theaters, etc.
15-year	• Land improvements—sidewalks, roads, fences, landscaping, and shrubbery
27.5-year	• Residential property, including elevators, escalators, and leasehold improvements
31.5-year	• Commercial property, including elevators, escalators, and leasehold improvements

There are some special classes and listings for farm property. For example, tell everyone that breeding hogs are in a three-year class! When dealing with real estate, you must be careful to clearly identify property that might be entitled to a shorter-year class. In general, items that can be removed without damaging the real estate are usually in the seven-year class. Also, when you install equipment, the cost of wiring the equipment and other costs to make it operational can be written off, using the same number of years as are used for the equipment.

A neat IRA tax trick

Someday you will take the money out of your IRA nestegg account. When you do, each dollar you take is subject to tax at the tax rates in effect in the year the money is taken. And if you jump the gun—take the money (all or a portion) before reaching age 59-1/2—you must pay a 10 percent penalty on top of the regular income tax.

Is there any way to avoid this penalty? Yes. Simply buy an annuity, which is an exception to the under 59-1/2 penalty rule. Make the annuity payable over your life expectancy or the joint life expectancies of you and your spouse.

In addition, there is a strategy that will make the annuity payments effectively tax-free. Here's what to do: take out a mortgage to buy a new home, renovate your old home, or take out a home equity loan on your old home. The interest on this new debt is deductible. Use the annuity income checks to help pay this new debt. To the extent that the interest equals or exceeds the annuity received, the annuity is tax-free. Work out the numbers with the people that sell annuities and your potential lender.

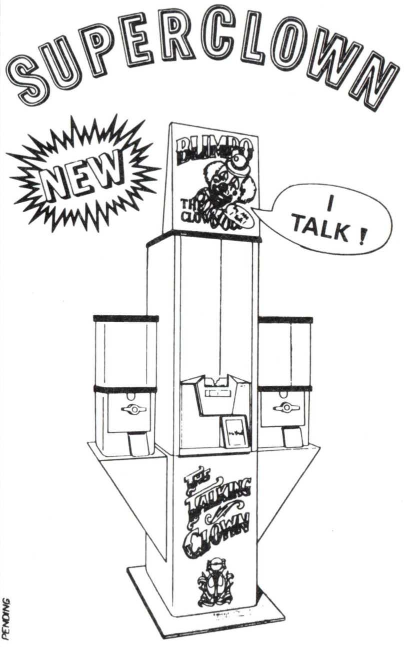
Tax-saving trick for traveling with spouses

Most trade associations design their annual conventions to be attended with the spouses of their business members. Try this simple, but very practical, fact pattern—the member spouse travels for valid business reasons, and the better half just travels along. What are the tax rules?

Sorry, you can't deduct your spouse's travel expenses. But remember this basic rule: you can deduct the same amount it would have cost you, just as if you had traveled alone. You are not limited to one-half of the total expense.

For example, the airlines often have a special deal if you travel with your spouse. You get a deduction equal to the fare for a single traveler. Or suppose you drive to a business convention. The entire transportation cost is deductible because the cost is the same whether you drive alone or not.

Lodging expenses give you another tax break. You can deduct the cost of a single room. For example, if the charge for a single room is $100, and a double costs $120, your deduction is a full $100. ☐



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Frank Seninsky

Building a simple monitor color drive tester

When a collector or field technician encounters a game whose monitor colors are not working correctly, it is helpful to determine whether the monitor or the PCB is bad. The call for help usually sounds like, "I'm missing all the red on the screen. Should I pull out the monitor or the logic board?" How many times has the good component been brought back to the shop for repair? Often an intermediate technician can repair the monitor on site once a positive diagnosis has been made.

Or how about this situation: We have been taught over and over by Randy Fromm that when you see only raster on the screen but have sound effects when you coin-up the game, it can be assumed that the monitor is at fault. However, there is still a chance (although slim) that the logic board may not be giving out the correct video signals. Your color drive tester can also verify this quickly and may save you from lugging the monitor to the shop.

A simple monitor color drive tester is a tool that I would like all our route people to carry. It is portable (approximately 4" x 3" x 1"), battery operated, and easy enough to build out of about $10 worth of Radio Shack parts (including batteries).

How it works

When a game logic board wants to turn the whole monitor screen all green, for example, all it does is send out positive square wave pulses to the green input pin of the monitor, while leaving the other two color inputs (red and blue) at zero or video ground level. If it desires a full red screen, it sends the square wave pulses to the red input terminal, leaving the other two at zero.

You can simulate this electrical condition by feeding a continuous DC pulse of the correct voltage, instead of the square wave pulses, and still produce the same physical result: turning the screen either all red, all green, or all blue. From experience, three volts DC is sufficient to drive the colors and low enough not to over-drive it and cause damage. Three volts DC is obtainable from two AA batteries. All you need to do is put them in a project box, pass the circuit through three push button switches (one for each color input), add an on/off switch, a LED "power on indicator," and connect four wires (red, green, blue, brown) with a standard video connector at the end, to make it idiot proof. (See figure #1.)

How to use it

1.) Unplug the video input to the monitor but leave the AC power connector on. If your game gives out negative composite sync (like most game do), it should have a two-piece input connector. The longer connector is for the color signals and the shorter one is for the sync signals. It is recommended that you leave the sync connector (shorter) plugged in so the logic board can still supply the sync signal to the monitor. This is not necessary for all monitor models, but it is necessary for the Wells-Gardner 7000 series, which won't fire up if the external sync signals aren't present.

2.) Plug in the connector from your monitor color drive tester to the six-pin color input of the monitor.

3.) Start your tests by pushing the three push button switches of your tester one at a time and observing the screen. You should be able to see all three (red, green, or blue) screens.

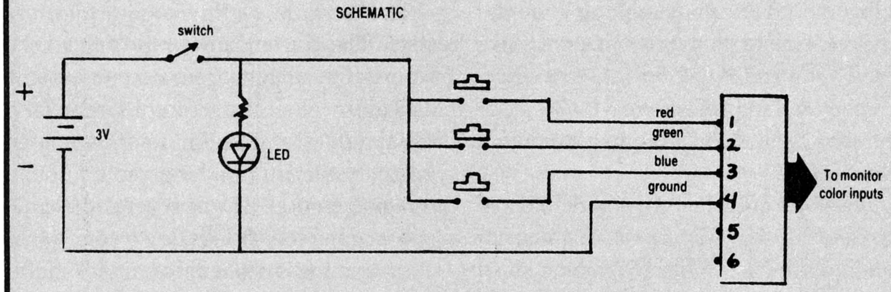
There are limitations: The monitor color drive tester doesn't generate its own sync signal, so it's not capable of showing sync-related problems on the monitor.

Thanks to our senior tech, Ramon, for building and testing the monitor color drive tester. As always...keep cranking! □

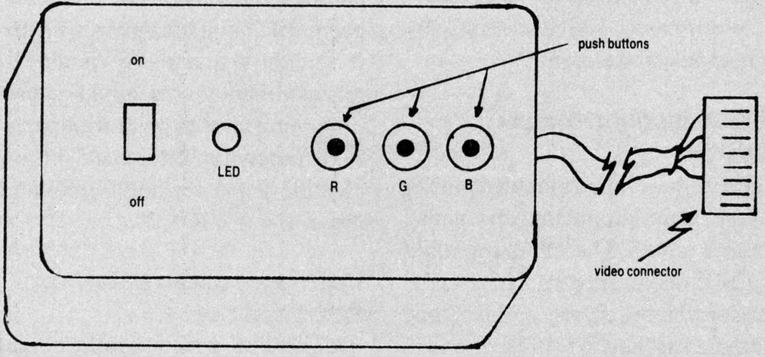
List of materials with Radio Shack part numbers:

- Plastic project box, 4-5/8'' x 2-9/16'' x 1-9/16'' (#270-222)
- On/Off slide switch (#275-407)
- Two AA battery holders (#270-401); two AA alkaline batteries.
- Three push button switches (#275-1547)
- One LED
- One limiting resistor (if needed)
- Four red, green blue, and black #22 standard wires (each three inches long)
- One six-pin molex connector

SCHEMATIC


switch
+
–
3V
LED
red
green
blue
ground
1
2
3
4
5
6
To monitor color inputs

SUGGESTED LAYOUT


on
off
LED
push buttons
R
G
B
video connector

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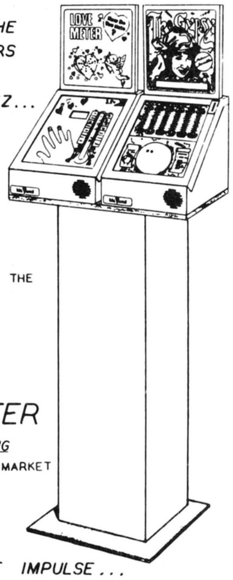

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PLAYER'S PERSPECTIVE

Tim Wolfe

Checking new games from Midway, Taito, and Data East

The new pinball from Midway Manufacturing—*The Bally Game Show*—is a non-aggressive game to play; it really offers good old-fashioned fun. The game theme is simple: complete sequences of cars, trucks, trips, and other prizes to get multi-balls and big scores.

Play action is quite typical in this made-from-TV game. The spin or nudge feature is a beginner's ramp shot that should charm the kids. It also offers a different mystery score that kept me quite entertained. After a while I was looking for different ways to score, because the big scoring of *Game Show* is really not on the center ramp. The new jumping over/under ramp styling is, however, quite fun to play. It may be easier to keep clean than some of the ramps of the past.

Shooting for ''Big Bucks'' scores very handsomely over the course of the game. Lock-ups for multi-ball and grand prize awards are achieved via the right ramp shot. The grand prize award is a timed speed bonus of three million points, decreasing by 100,000 points. This bonus is similar to the hurry-up feature of *Black Knight 2000*.

Game Show will tend to have a long mean game time and should be set for three-ball play. Serious players, though, will not find it very challenging. In my second game, I racked up a score of 50 million (no lie). It is unclear why this game does not have ''specials''; it may be an add-a-ball game. Players are beginning to miss the special feature on recent machines like *Game Show* and *Police Force*. As you may remember, the special in *Police Force* was replaced by the five free game random feature.

This pin is colorful on the playfield and backglass. It shows a cartooned announcer handing out cash, with four game show contestants behind the announcer and his pearly whites. The playfield shows a blonde contestant in front of the wheel of fortune and its ''big bucks'' feature. There is also an applause meter mounted within the lightbox area. It lights as the audience cheers for good shooting.

Game Show is a safe street location and arcade game that shouldn't offer any real reliability problems. I give it a rank of ##1/2 for arcade and street play.

Data East Pinball's *Phantom of the Opera*

Data East's new horror-themed pinball is based on the movie and Broadway play of the same name. The company hired former Bally pinball artist Paul Faris, who had such successes as *Paragon* in 1981 and the original *Lost World* in 1978. Typically, Faris art on a pinball means dark colors and an adult-oriented—sometimes even violent—theme. So it is with *Phantom*.

The artwork is a little too gory for my taste. There are death symbols that vary from a victim hanging from a noose on the backglass to locust and scorpion targets on the playfield. But the imprisoned woman is quite beautiful, and the game's sound package is good. The heavy metal/classic opera sound sends chills down your spine.

Play action is challenging. Quick multi-ball is encouraged through the ball entry lanes. Three drop targets pitched above the regular playing surface unfold, creating a coffin-type ball lock-up. It's a good shot for locking up balls. *Phantom* also has the ''double-your-score'' feature that was introduced on Williams' *Jokerz*.

Overall, *Phantom* is a challenging game. It isn't the type of pinball where players will immediately run up the score. It is doubtful that many women will want to play this game, because it's just too intimidating. But experienced players will find *Phantom* entertaining. This is a street location game for adults, not an arcade piece. I give it ##1/2.

Taito goes underwater with *Battle Shark*

Taito has a new single-player submarine game that is fun and exciting. It should be a good arcade piece; there are very few new sea games on the market. Sub games are always a fun variation and an enhancement to typical arcade play. The cabinet is styled similarly to other large sub games of the past. This leads me to believe that *Battle Shark* will be a very limited street game.

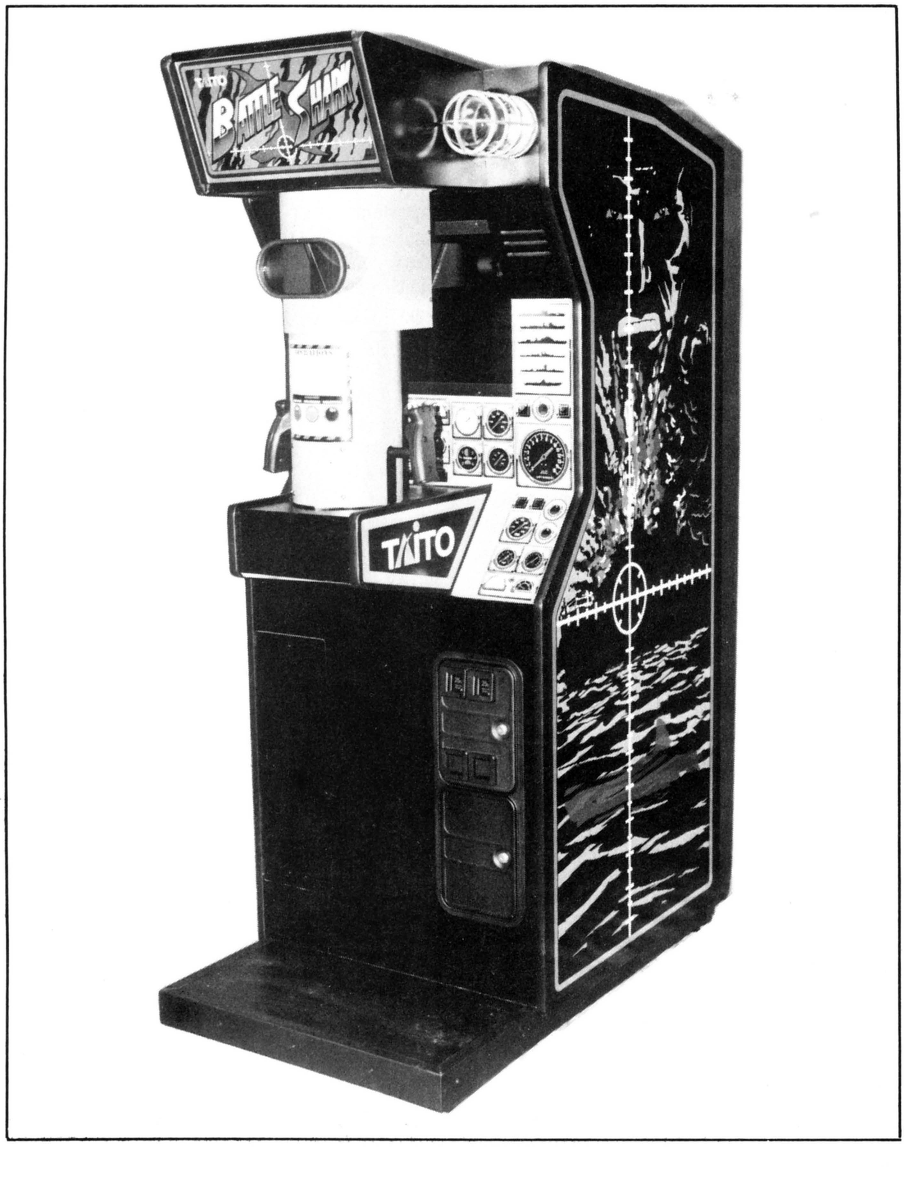
Battle Shark is a fairly typical sea battle game. It's not just a sea-to-sea battle; rather, it is an air-to-sea battle that reminded me of recent jet fighting games like *AfterBurner*. Guided missiles cruise in at quick speeds while you try to blow up ocean bad guys with slow-moving—but realistic—firing navigation.

Probably the biggest drawback to game play is the difficulty in locking on to the target, but it does give the game some realism. When the player gets hit, the cabinet shakes and view glass appears to be shattering.

Battle Shark plays somewhat different than other sea games of the past because it's based on player life and armament, not time. I guess I prefer some of the older sub games that are timed and offer extended play for score and mission checkpoints, as opposed to this newer type of game play. *Battle Shark* is a decent arcade game that should attract enough players. I rank it *##*.

Next time, ''Player's Perspective'' will lead us to some video by Atari Games and to the classical styling of the new Premier/Gottlieb pinball, *Silver Slugger*. ☐

Here are Tim Wolfe's rankings: #####=buy all you can; ####=excellent; ###=good; ##=fair; #=poor.



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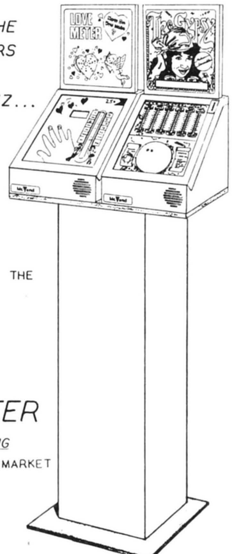

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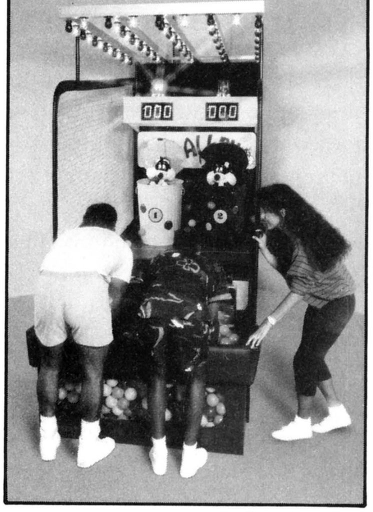

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Randy Fromm

Replacement parts:

What to get and where to get 'em

Don't you hate it when you've found a bad component in a game but don't have the proper replacement component to repair it? Parts procurement is the bane of the service technician. However, it is one very important aspect of the repair business.

While replacement parts such as flipper assemblies and steering units are unique to our industry (and must be purchased through a distributor or parts house), electronic components are not. Components like diodes, transistors, resistors, capacitors, and integrated circuits are common to all types of electronic equipment, and are the same whether they are used in a stereo system, computer, or video game.

There are many suppliers of replacement components that may be unknown to you because they do not advertise in industry trade journals. Let's face it, to them the coin-op business is pretty small potatoes when compared to the national computer market. The major suppliers of electronic components put their advertising dollars into magazines such as Popular Electronics and Radio Electronics.

Most of these suppliers will ship C.O.D. or take a credit card number over the phone. Likewise, most have a minimum order (usually between $10 and $25).

Common components

To help you plan your purchases, I have provided a list of components that we keep in stock in our shop. I have not listed quantities because that will vary between different types of routes.

Some of the part numbers should already be familiar to you. If they are, order a lot of them! If you've never heard of some of the parts, and you haven't replaced one in the past, you may not want to get any at all. This is strictly a guide to help you remember what to order. ☐

Parts Suppliers

- Active Electronics
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  Westborough, MA 01581
  (800) 228-4834 (800) 228-4836 (MA)
- Allied Electronics
  401 East 8th St.
  Fort Worth, TX 76102
  (800) 433-5700
- Caltronics
  21315 Saticoy Street
  Canoga Park, CA 91304
  (818) 346-4936
- Digi-Key
  PO Box 677
  Thief River Falls, MN 56701
  (800) 344-4539
- Fordham
  260 Motor Parkway
  Hauppauge, NY 11788
  (800) 645-9518 (800) 832-1446 NY
- J.C. Electronics, Inc.
  1428 N. Broad Street
  Hillside, NJ 07205
  (800) 828-4560 (201) 705-3400 (NJ)
- Jameco Electronics
  1355 Shoreway Road
  Belmont, CA 94002
  (415) 592-8097
- JDR Microdevices
  110 Knowles Dr.
  Los Gatos, CA 95030
  (800) 538-5000
- MCM Electronics
  858 East Congress Park Dr.
  Centerville, OH 45459
  (800) 543-4330 (800) 762-4315 (OH)
- Mouser Electronics
  2401 Hwy. 287 North
  Mansfield, TX 76063
  (800) 346-6873
- Newark Electronics
  4801 North Ravenswood Ave.
  Chicago, IL 60640
  (312) 784-5100
- New Jersey Semiconductor Products, Inc.
  20 Stearn Ave.
  Springfield, NJ 07081
  (201) 376-2922 (212) 227-6005
- Parts Express International, Inc.
  340 East First Street
  Dayton, Ohio 45402
  (800) 338-0531
- Sintec Company
  28 8th St.
  PO Box 410
  Frenchtown, NJ 08825
  (800) 526-5960
- Solid State Sales
  PO Box 74D
  Somerville, MA 02143
  (800) 343-5230
- World Wide Component Distributors
  18 Stern Ave.
  Springfield, NJ 07081
  (800) 222-6268 (201) 467-6264

Parts List

Diodes

1N4004 (general purpose diode)
MDA3502 (200 VOLT, 35 AMP BRIDGE RECTIFIER)

Transistors

2N4401 (general purpose transistor)
2N4403 (general purpose transistor)
TIP122 or SE9302 (pinball coil driver transistors)
TIP 36C (pinball coil driver transistor)
TIP 42 (pinball lamp driver)
2SC3039 (switching transistor for power supplies)
2SD870 (monitor horizontal output transistor in Electrohome or Wells-Gardner K4900 series)
2SD1398 (monitor horizontal output transistor in Wells-Gardner K7000 series)
BU508 (monitor horizontal output transistor in Hantarex MTC9000 monitor)
2SD1880 (monitor horizontal output transistor in Sharp Image)
2N3904 (pinball switch driver)
2N5550 (pinball switch driver) (2N5550 subs for 2N3904)

Integrated Circuits

7812 (+12 volt regulator)
7905 (-5 volt regulator)
7408 (integrated circuit—pinball solenoid driver circuit)
4011 (integrated circuit—pinball switch returns)

Capacitors

100 uf, 25vdc
220 uf, 25vdc
470 uf, 25vdc
1000 uf, 16vdc low ESR
2200 uf, 25vdc low ESR (for switching power supplies)
3300 uf, 16vdc low ESR / 4700 uf, 35vdc
10,000 uf, 35vdc
20,000 uf, 16vdc
47 uf, 160 vdc (C511 replacement for Electrohome monitors)
10uf, 250vdc (C107 replacement for Electrohome, C702 in W-G)

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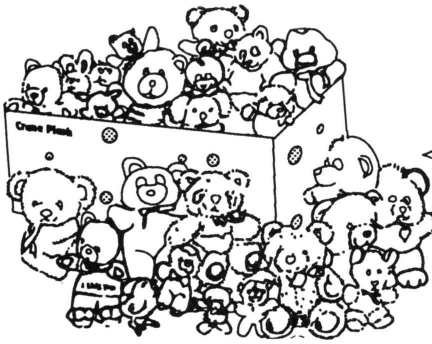
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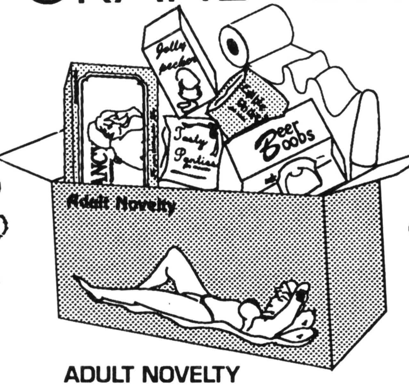
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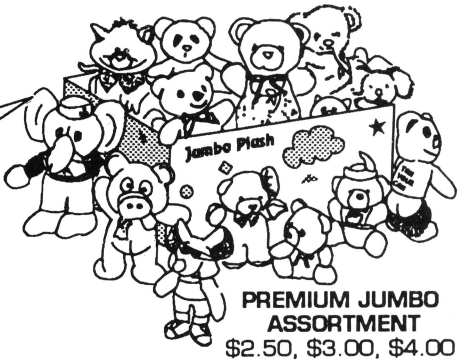
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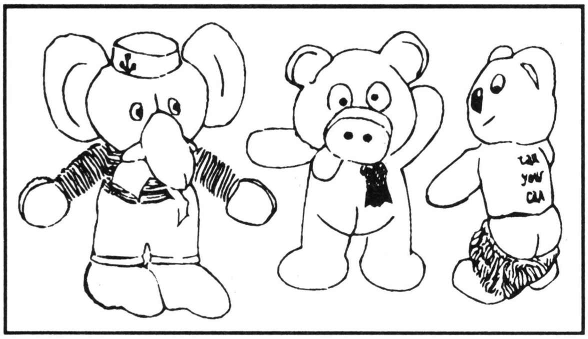

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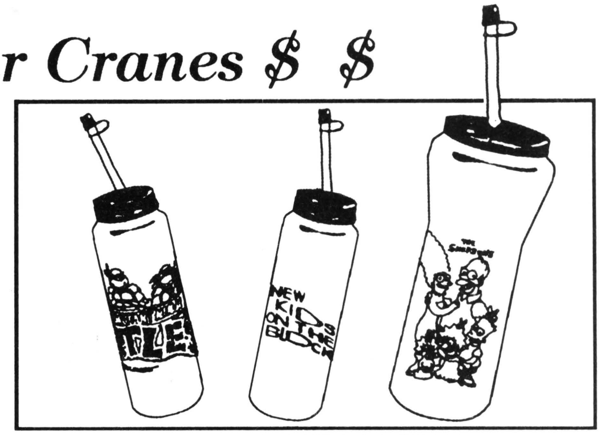
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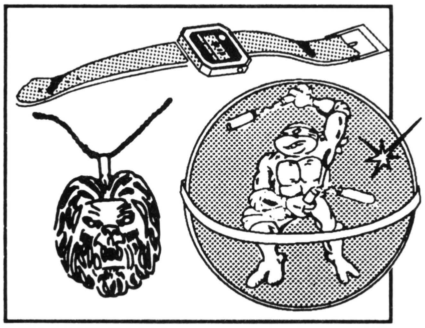

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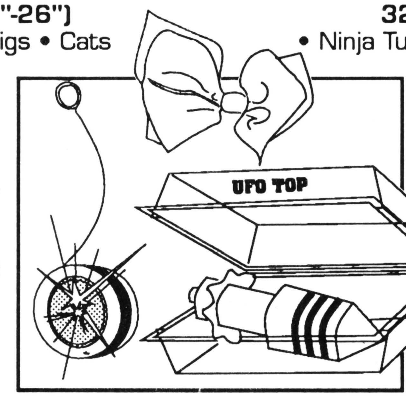

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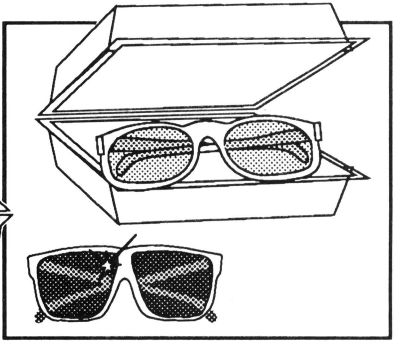

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The popular sport of football is also featured in a Brechner plush figure available either 13 inches wide or 18 inches wide.

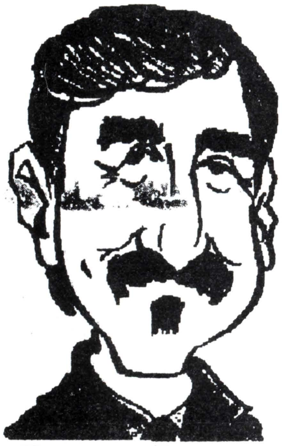
For more information on these sportsmen, call Dan Brechner & Co. (800) 645-8142 or (516) 437-8400.

A large collection of Hershey licensed items are now available from **Acme Premium Supply**. Choose from that famous Hershey's Kiss and candy bar wrappers in a variety of sizes. All-time favorite candies such as Mr. Goodbar, Krackel, and Reeses Pieces are included.

There's also the Hershey T-shirt bears that come in four sizes, packed in an assorted variety and wearing shirts with the Hershey's, Reeses, and Krackel logos. For more information on these items, call Acme Premium Supply Co. (800) 325-7888 ext. 422 or (314) 531-8880.

Fellow merchandise suppliers are invited to send in items for inclusion in this monthly column. Just mark your entries for "Merchandise Market" and we'll be happy to take photos here; or submit your own photos. Call (504) 488-7003 to reserve a place for your products. Look for more unusual items coming next month. ☐

krackel
HERSHEY'S
mr. Goodbar
krackel
Reeses
HERSHEY'S KISSES

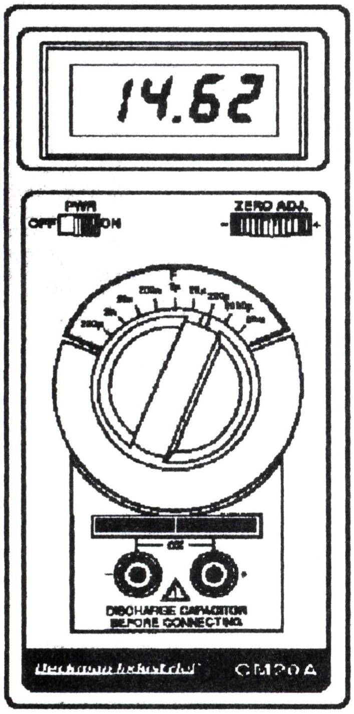


Randy Fromm

Working without a good meter is like working in the dark...

As I travel around the country teaching the Arcade School, I get to check out lots of different types of digital multimeters. Some are accurate and easy to work with; others are not at all. Some are expensive, others are cheap (in more ways that one.) For our applications in the coin-op biz, you can't beat Beckman for meters that provide accurate, reliable measurements at a reasonable cost.

This month's meter special. June only!
CM 20A Capacitor tester - $139.95



The capacitance meter can be enormously helpful when working on monitors and power supplies. It takes only a minute to unsolder the two leads of a capacitor and test it with the meter. During a recent Arcade School class in Baltimore, students brought in over a dozen monitors to repair during our "hands-on" lab sessions. Problems ranged from screens that were bright on one side and dark on the other to pictures that were severely "keystoned" (pulled in on the sides.) These symptoms can generally be attributed to capacitor failures. Although we did not have schematic diagrams, it was pretty simple to pull the electrolytic capacitors and test them with the capacitance meter. We found a number of bad caps and replaced them. Our success rate was 100%!

The CM20A measures capacitance ranges from .1 pF to 19.999mF with one selector switch letting you choose from nine easy-to-dial measurement ranges with a basic accuracy of .5%. The CM20A is equipped with both test leads and a special socket for testing small capacitors. Just plug 'em in and read the capacitance right off the display!

Please send me ______ CM20A Capacitance meters. (CA residents add 7% sales tax)
Add $5.00 shipping and handling cost for entire order. C.O.D. telephone orders Okay!

Name ______________________________

Company ______________________________

Address ______________________________

City, State, Zip ______________________________

Telephone (   ) ______________________________

RANDY FROMM'S
ARCADE
SCHOOLS

Randy Fromm's Arcade Schools 7960 Culowee St. La Mesa, CA 92041 (619) 697-4035

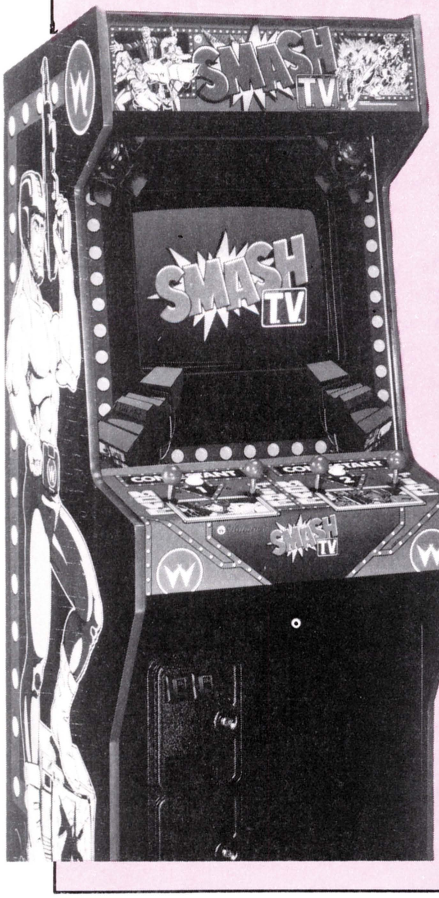
Smash TV

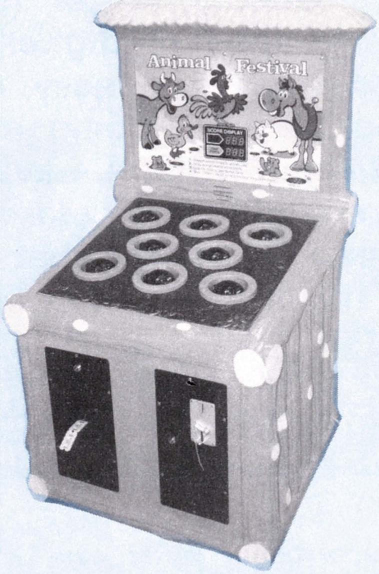
Williams Electronics introduces a new dedicated two-player interactive game, *Smash TV*, set in the year 1999. Players become contestants in a futuristic game show, where they compete for cash and prizes and their very existence before a live studio audience.

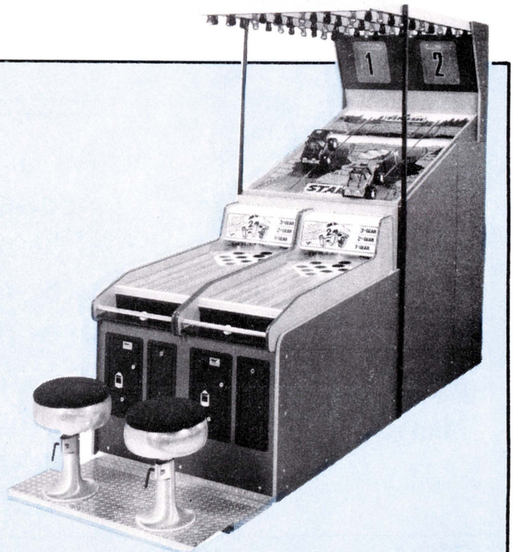
Contestants are armed with high-tech weapons and power-up devices such as grenades, lasers, smart bombs, and force fields. They enter enclosed arenas to battle with drones, mutants, and powerful boss monsters.

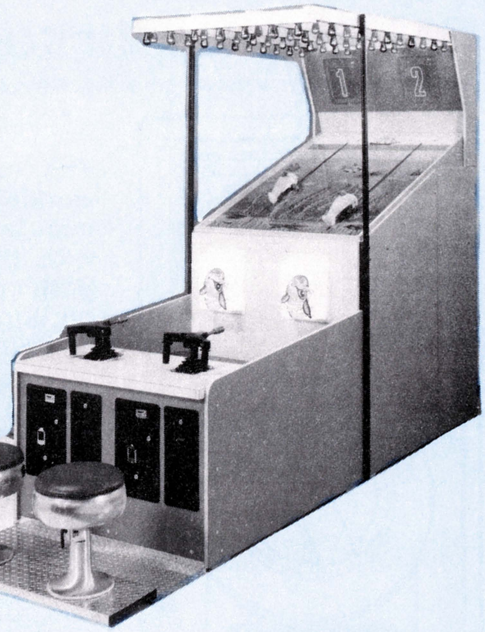
The game is housed in a cabinet available with either a 19-inch or 25-inch color monitor. Controls include two joysticks per player; features include buy-in and continuation to keep the action going.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Williams Electronics Games Inc., 3401 N. California Ave., Chicago, IL 60618; (312) 267-2240; FAX (312) 267-8435.









Animal Festival, Truck Race, Water Race

Vari-Tech International adds three new units to its line of redemption games with *Animal Festival*, *Truck Race*, and *Water Race*.

Animal Race is designed to appeal to kids of all ages. It's a single-player game that tests quickness and coordination as players "bop" animal heads and beat the clock to gain bonus time. Players who beat the best score of the day can become "King of the Farm."

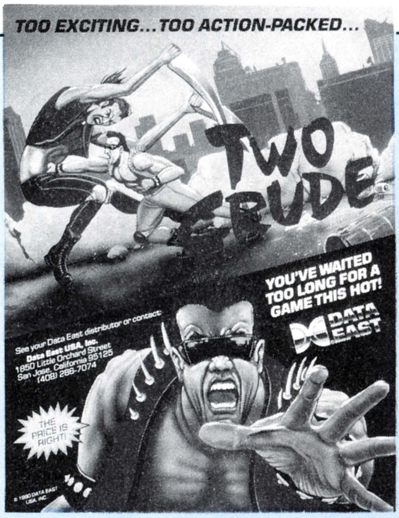
The game comes with digital sound package, ticket dispenser, adjustable play and bonus play timing, and adjustable payout and price per play.

Truck Race is a two-player game based on three-level Roll-A-Ball scoring. It can be played against the clock or competitively against another player. Gears grind and engines roar as the trucks ascend the rugged terrain.

Water Race is a two-player game that uses a water gun to shoot a moving target while advancing the player's character. Competitive play for two or more players is possible, as well as playing against the "house clock."

Both *Truck Race* and *Water Race* come with these standard features: coin mech, ticket dispenser, digital sound, winner bell, and internal timer.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Vari-Tech International, 4520 Spartan Industrial Drive, S.W., Grandville, MI 49468; (800) 245-2737 or (616) 538-4088.



TOO EXCITING…TOO ACTION-PACKED…

TWO CRUDE

YOU'VE WAITED TOO LONG FOR A GAME THIS HOT!

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See your Data East distributor or contact:
Data East USA, Inc.
1850 Little Orchard Street
San Jose, California 95125
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THE PRICE IS RIGHT!

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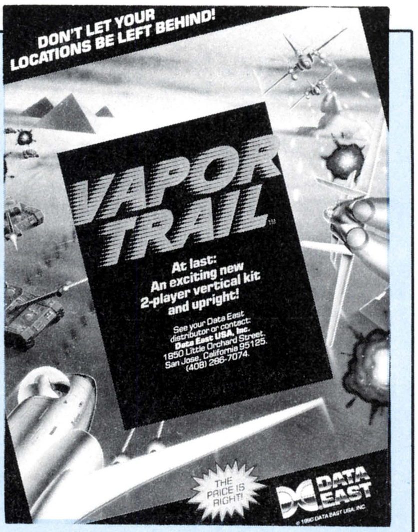

DON'T LET YOUR LOCATIONS BE LEFT BEHIND!

VAPOR TRAIL™

At last:
An exciting new
2-player vertical kit
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Two Crude, Vapor Trail

Data East debuts a video duo in the fighting game, *Two Crude,* and the action adventure game, *Vapor Trail.*

In *Two Crude*, a dedicated two-player interactive game billed as the next *Bad Dudes*, players use martial arts skills and strategy to gain supremacy over enemies. Two buttons and a joystick are allotted for each player station.

In *Vapor Trail*, a game available as both dedicated and kit, players can enjoy the action of piloting a jet aircraft. Shooting down other treacherous enemy aircraft and gaining weapons along the way is the game scenario here. Controls include a joystick and two buttons per player; the game is a two-player interactive with buy-in and continuation. The monitor is vertical.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Data East USA Inc., 1850 Little Orchard St., San Jose, CA 95125; (408) 286-7074; FAX (408) 971-0722.

Skee-Toss

Betson Enterprises introduces a children's redemption game, *Skee-Toss*, which uses the same microprocessor electronics found in its *Dribbles Jr. Basketball* game.

Skee-Toss is a joint effort between Betson Enterprises and Skee-Ball Inc., maker of the alley bowler, *Skee-Ball*. Many of the parts in *Skee-Toss* will be interchangeable with the traditional *Skee-Ball* alleys.

Skee-Toss is being manufactured at the Skee-Ball Inc. facility in Lansdale, Pa., with marketing and sales being handled by the redemption department at Betson Enterprises in Moonachie, N.J.

This is the first children's toss game to stress player interaction. It has an attract mode featuring speech to invite players up to the game (''Hi kids, come play *Skee-Toss*'') and to compliment them on a good toss. Positive feedback is assured as the game combines both visual and audio stimulation.

A volcano erupts on the back of the game when a high score is achieved.

Skee-Toss is constructed of solid plywood with a birch veneer. Dimensions are 3 ft. wide by 6 ft. high by 5-1/2 ft. deep.

For more information, write Betson Enterprises, 6 Empire Blvd., Moonachie, NJ 07074; (800) 524-2343 or (201) 440-2200; FAX (201) 440-4463.

Strike Eagle

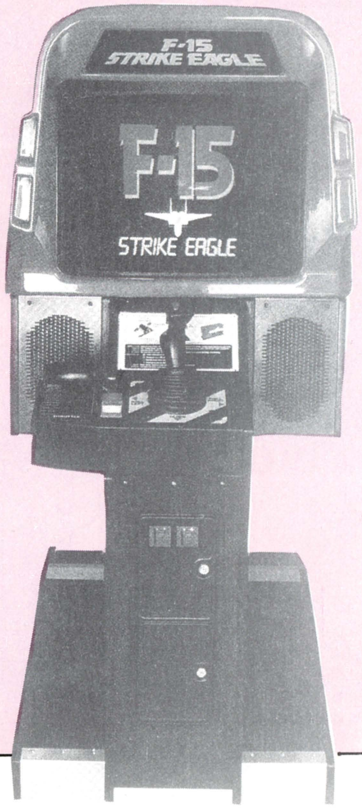
A supersonic F-15 jet is at the heart of a new dedicated video from MicroProse Games. Named *Strike Eagle*, the game offers depth and realism as players experience the turns, rolls, and loops of an F-15.

Exceptional 3-D graphics await the player in this action adventure game housed in an unusual cabinet configuration. The graphics draw on polygons for the multi-dimensional effect.

Players can embark on multiple missions in six different combat arenas and vie for awards, promotions, and commendations. Multiple skill levels are offered along with options to buy extra weapons and fuel.

A new computer has been designed for the game, which presents intelligent actions from the enemy to challenge players even further. The game is based on a best-selling computer game of the same name.

For more information, or distributor referral, write MicroProse Games, 180 Lakefront Drive, Hunt Valley, MD 21030; (301) 771-6700; FAX (301) 771-1174.



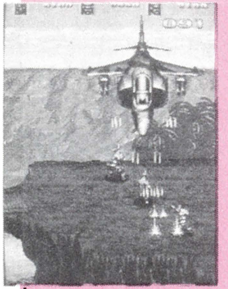
MERCS

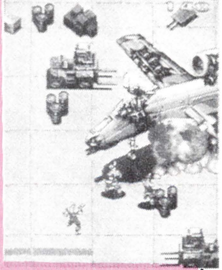
Capcom debuts a three-player dedicated video with *MERCS*, a game produced with the CPS super chip.

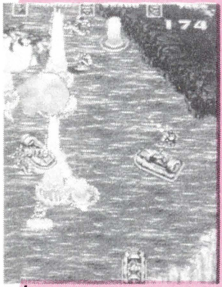
In *MERCS*, players become members of an elite corps of mercenaries who set out to rescue a former president held hostage by rebel forces in central Africa's Zutulu.

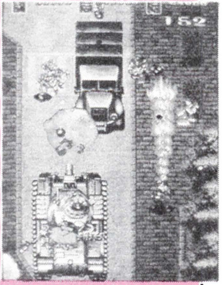
Six rounds of challenging play await as the characters battle enemies equipped with sophisticated weaponry. All the action takes place on a large 25-inch vertical monitor. Buy-in and continuation features guarantee longer playing periods as the dangerous mission nears completion.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Capcom USA Inc., 3303 Scott Blvd., Santa Clara, CA 95054; (408) 727-0400; FAX (408) 496-6679.

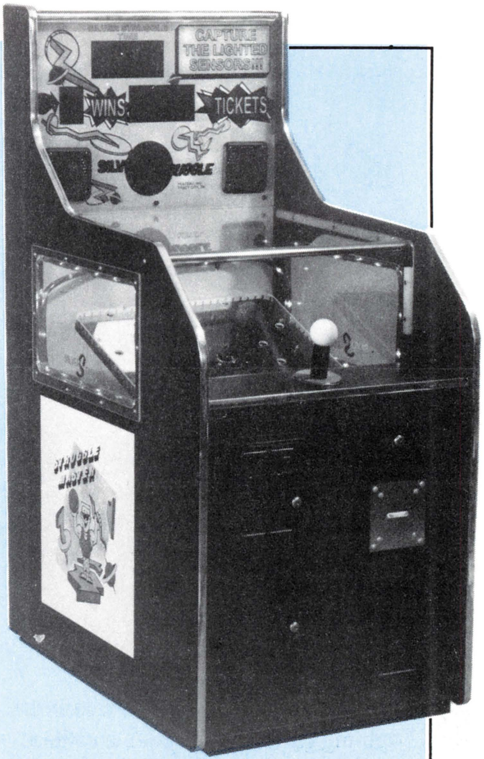








Silver Struggle



Plateau has developed a single-player redemption game, *Silver Struggle*, that features a moving playfield of 15 targets that light up at random.

The game asks players to move a coin over the lighted targets before a specified time expires. Tickets are won for accumulating as many of the lighted targets as possible. The coin is maneuvered around the playfield with an airplane-type control stick.

Each time a quarter is inserted in the game tickets are allocated to each of eight award levels. Tickets not won are accumulated until a player reaches that award level.

The cabinet is constructed of melamine laminate-covered particle board and has an over/under coin mech. The ticket magazine holds 10,000 tickets dispensed by a Deltronics ticket dispenser. Several operator-controlled dip switch settings allow the game to be tailored to the needs of the location.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Plateau Inc., 1 Plateau Lane, Tracy City, TN 37387; (800) 228-8974 or (615) 592-2000; FAX (615) 592-2010.

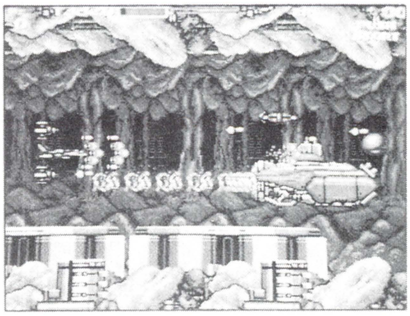
Air Buster

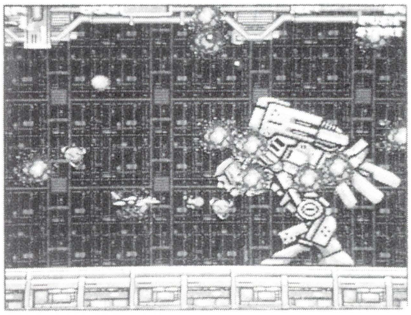
''Not so friendly skies'' await players in Sharp Image's two-player interactive horizontal monitor kit, *Air Buster*.

This space-themed, ''shoot-em-up'' fantasy adventure features buy-in and continuation, 60 different enemy characters in eight game stages, and a special hyperspace capability.

Players use joysticks and two buttons while trying to master each of the eight scenes in hopes of saving the world from a certain demise. The kit is available in 19-, 25-, and 27-inch graphic packages that support both Dynamo and KD universal cabinets. The game is licensed from Namco.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Sharp Image Electronics Inc., 9834 Glenoaks Blvd., Sun Valley, CA 91325; (800) 448-8100 or (818) 767-8855; FAX (818) 767-5311.





Super Crane, Jumbo Super Crane

Imaginomics has designed the *Super Crane* and *Jumbo Super Crane* and loaded them with special features.

Both models offer a special "Ad-Marq" advertising marquee that flashes, wipes, rolls, and scrolls to attract player attention. A music generator is built into the unit along with a solid-state microprocessor controller.

Other features include joystick control, digital claw tension control, built-in diagnostics, Mars $1-$5 bill acceptor, and digital display that tells time left and play credits. Among the options are a ticket dispenser and modem for remote money, toy count, and diagnostics.

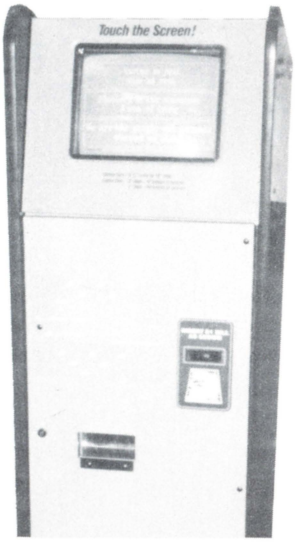
Dimensions of the *Super Crane* are 78 inches high by 30.5 inches wide by 34 inches deep. The *Jumbo Super Crane* is 78 inches high by 47 inches wide by 34 inches deep.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Imaginomics Corp., 607-50A Ellis Road, Durham, NC 27703; (800) 828-8730 or (919) 596-4543; FAX (919) 598-1486.

Snappy Stickers

Profitable Games is marketing the *Snappy Stickers* printing machine that allows operators to provide custom printed stickers suitable for bumpers, banners, labels, sports events, advertising, and school lockers.

Features include a touch screen, programmable pre-selected stickers, state-of-the-art printer, quality vinyl stock, programmable timer, and location ID on every sticker.



Customers touch the screen to get a list of pre-programmed stickers from which to choose, or they may touch the screen again to get an alphabet screen and form their own message.

As a special precaution, the machine does not allow printing of any bad language. It will not print offensive words if any patrons try to key them in.

The unit measures 20 inches wide by 60 inches high by 21.5 inches deep. It is appropriate for placement in arcades, C-stores, movie theaters, restaurants and bars, retail and grocery stores, and amusement parks. The machine comes standard with a bill acceptor; all servicing and re-filling is done from the front of the machine.

Extra paper and cartridge carriers of ink are available from Profitable Games. The stickers measure 13 inches long and are self-stick. Messages can be printed in three different type styles.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Profitable Games Inc., 855 W. North Ave., Chicago, Il 60622; (312) 943-1017.

Angle System

Plateau has improved its *Angle System* cabinets by adding a swing-out monitor mechanism. The mechanism allows the monitor to swing out in a vertical or horizontal position for easy access to all monitor controls.

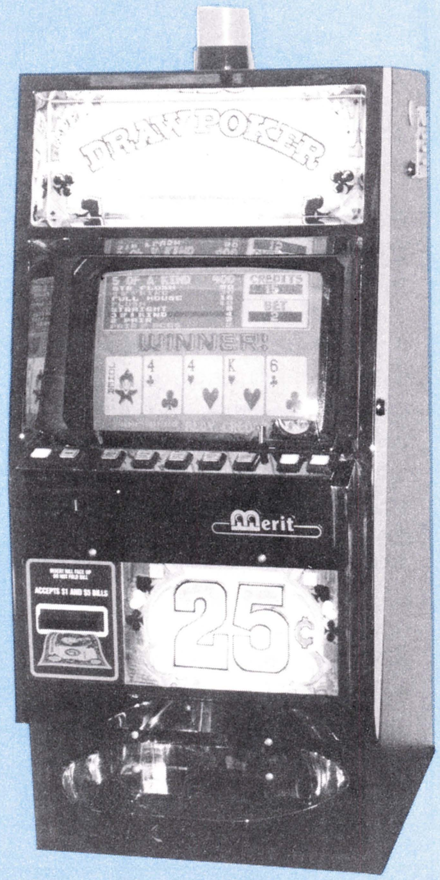
The new monitor brackets will accommodate either a 19-inch or 25-inch monitor in the same cabinet. The feature allows operators to give a location a larger screen without moving the cabinet. All steel brackets feature positive in and out stops with 3/4-inch diameter steel pins.

Previous Plateau cabinets are not obsolete; a drawer from the company's first cabinet fits in a cabinet coming off the assembly line today.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Plateau Inc., 1 Plateau Lane, Tracy City, TN 37387; (800) 228-8974 or (615) 592-2000; FAX (615) 592-2010.

THE ANGLE SYSTEM

Montana Superstar, South Dakota Superstar

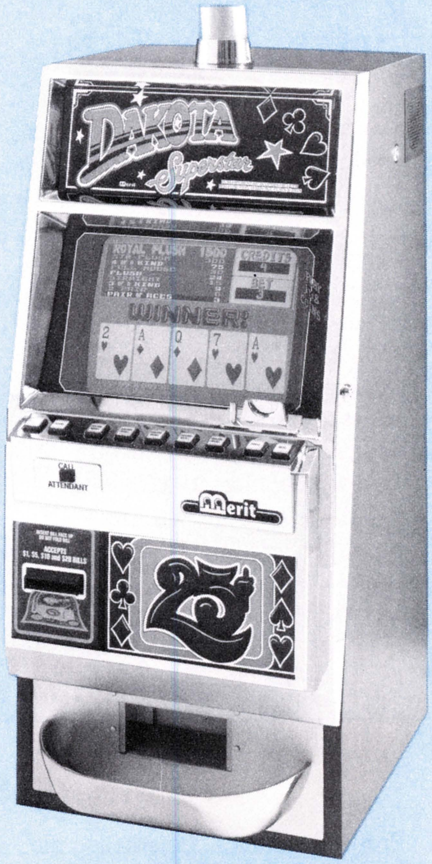


Merit Industries introduces two new video poker games housed in casino-styled cabinets constructed of metal, chrome, and wood.

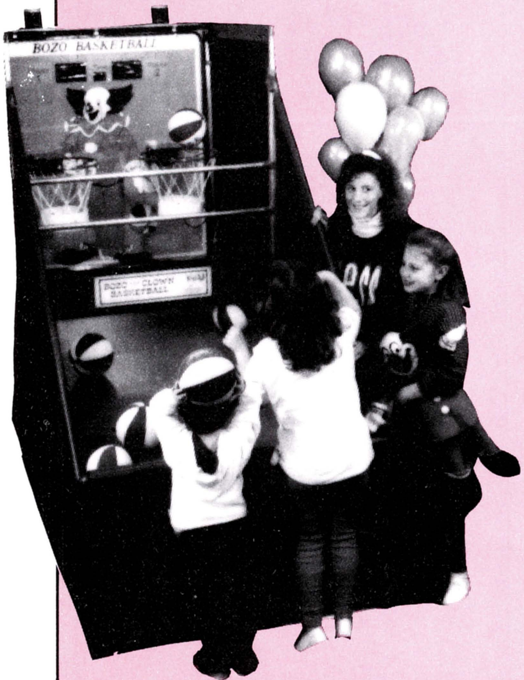
Montana Superstar is a Montana-approved poker game that meets all the requirements of that state. It comes with a bill acceptor that handles denominations of $1-5-10-20 bills.

South Dakota Superstar is a new video poker approved in the state of South Dakota. It features the same standard bill acceptor as its sister machine. Both games have a winner light on the top and a specially designed marquee.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Merit Industries, P.O. Box 5004, 2525 State Road, Bensalem, PA 19020; (800) 523-2760 or (215) 639-4700; FAX (215) 639-5346.



Bozo Basketball

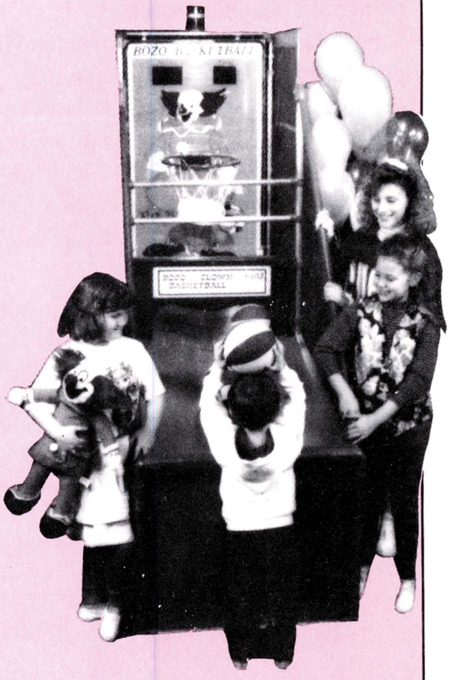


Design Plus Industries now offers two models of *Bozo Basketball*, a new youth-size redemption game.

Bozo Basketball comes in both single and double player models, both featuring flashing lights, snappy circus music, and colorful detailing. Both games measure 89 inches long.

The optional ticket system has adjustable ticket settings and revolving flashing winner light. The well-known image of Bozo the Clown is a sure-fire attraction for youngsters. Although aimed for the pre-school to pre-teen market, the game is challenging enough for older players.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Design Plus Industries, 737 E. Marietta Ave., Peoria Heights, IL 61614; (800) 541-1288 or (309) 682-9359; FAX (309) 682-9394.



Bill,

I need to know ...

1. Should I rotate the Double Dragon at Quick Mart?
2. Did you want to put another machine into Zak's Pizza?
3. Should we sell one of our Main Events?
4. Do you want me to pull everything from Video Theatre this week?
5. Does Hilda have my collection reports ready for tomorrow?

Charles

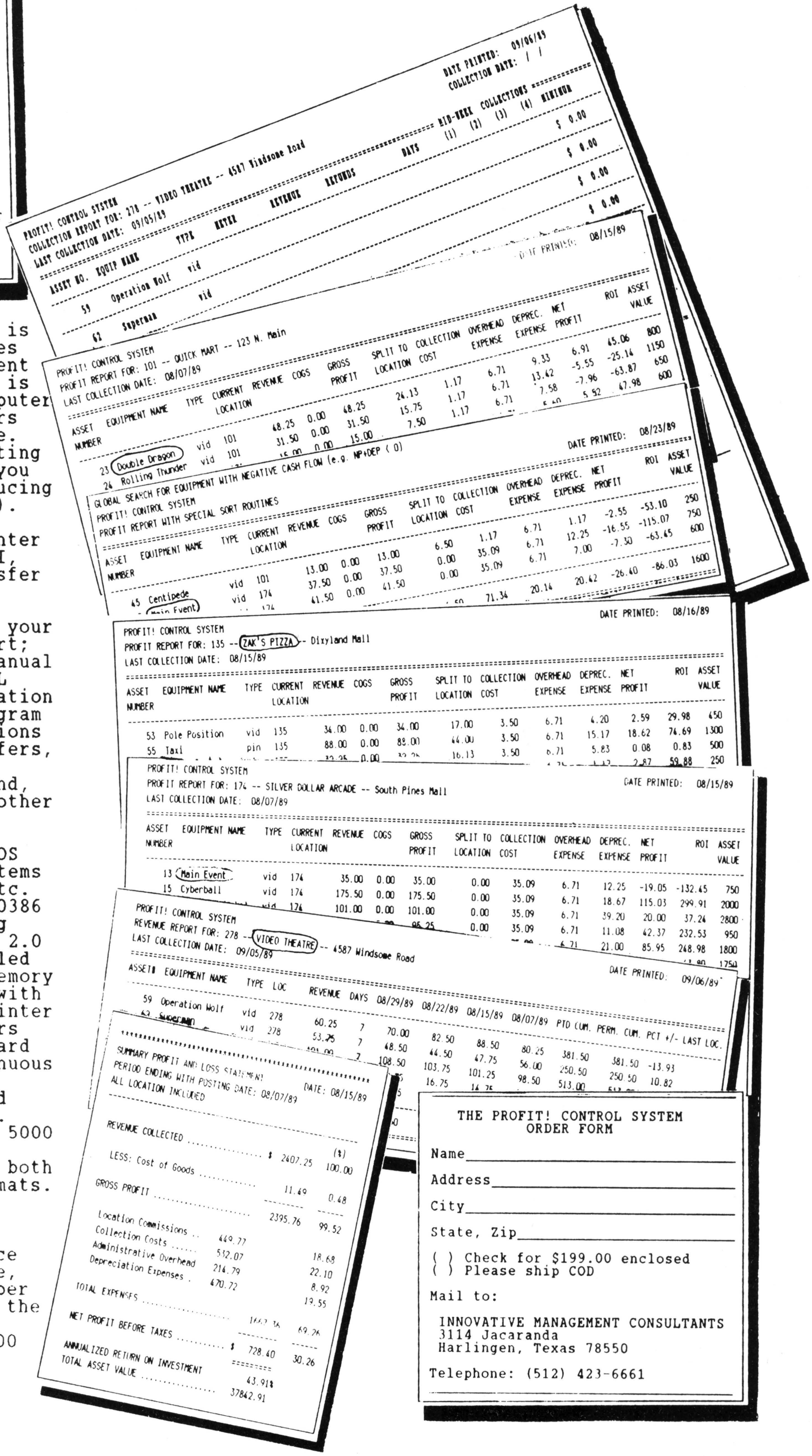
The PROFIT! CONTROL SYSTEM is computer software that takes control of all your amusement or vending equipment. Here is software for your microcomputer that calculates and delivers profits to your bottom line. It is not a general accounting package; its a system for you if you manage revenue-producing equipment (arcade or route). It makes every machine and every location a profit center and focuses on profits, ROI, collection histories, transfer dates, and meter readings.

And getting the answers to your questions is no great effort; our 70+ page instruction manual explains THE PROFIT CONTROL SYSTEM in detail. Installation is quick and using the program is easy. Entering collections is simple; equipment transfers, different token rates, and minimums are no problem. And, you never have to write another collection ticket by hand.

Here are the details. MS/DOS compatible for popular systems like IBM, Compaq, Tandy, etc. based on 8086, 80286, or 80386 microprocessors. Operating System: MS/DOS (or PC/DOS) 2.0 or higher. Language: Compiled QuickBasic by Microsoft. Memory Requirement: Minimum 256k with two disks or harddisk. Printer Requirements: 132 characters per line capacity in standard or compressed print, continuous paper feed recommended. Equipment Capacity: Limited only by disk storage space. Practical limits are 50 to 5000 pieces of equipment. Disk Format: All orders include both 3-1/2" and 5-1/4" disk formats.

HOW TO ORDER

Call (512) 423-6661 to place your order. Give your name, address, and telephone number and we'll ship COD or mail the order form along with your check for $195.00 plus $4.00 postage ($199.00).



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PROFIT! CONTROL SYSTEM                                              DATE PRINTED:  09/06/89
COLLECTION REPORT FOR: 278 -- VIDEO THEATRE -- 4587 Windsome Road   COLLECTION DATE:  / /
LAST COLLECTION DATE:  09/05/89
=============================================================== MID-WEEK  COLLECTIONS =========
ASSET NO.  EQUIP NAME    TYPE   METER   REVENUE   REFUNDS   DAYS   (1)  (2)  (3)  (4)  MINIMUM
-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------
   59   Operation Wolf   vid                                                             $ 0.00
-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------
   62   Superman         vid                                                             $ 0.00
-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------
                                                                                         $ 0.00
-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------
                                                                                         $ 0.00
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PROFIT! CONTROL SYSTEM                                                            DATE PRINTED:  08/15/89
PROFIT REPORT FOR: 101 -- QUICK MART -- 123 N. Main
LAST COLLECTION DATE:  08/07/89
=========================================================================================================
ASSET   EQUIPMENT NAME    TYPE  CURRENT   REVENUE  COGS  GROSS   SPLIT TO  COLLECTION  OVERHEAD  DEPREC.  NET     ROI    ASSET
NUMBER                          LOCATION                 PROFIT  LOCATION  COST        EXPENSE   EXPENSE  PROFIT         VALUE
---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------
   23 Double Dragon    vid   101       68.25   0.00  68.25   24.13     1.17        6.71      9.33     6.91    65.06   800
   24 Rolling Thunder  vid   101       31.50   0.00  31.50   15.75     1.17        6.71     13.42    -5.55   -25.14  1150
                                       15.00   0.00  15.00    7.50     1.17        6.71      7.58    -7.96   -63.87   650
                                                                                                     5.52    47.98   600
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GLOBAL SEARCH FOR EQUIPMENT WITH NEGATIVE CASH FLOW (e.g. NP+DEP ( 0)              DATE PRINTED:  08/23/89
PROFIT! CONTROL SYSTEM
PROFIT REPORT WITH SPECIAL SORT ROUTINES
=========================================================================================================
ASSET   EQUIPMENT NAME    TYPE  CURRENT   REVENUE  COGS  GROSS   SPLIT TO  COLLECTION  OVERHEAD  DEPREC.  NET     ROI      ASSET
NUMBER                          LOCATION                 PROFIT  LOCATION  COST        EXPENSE   EXPENSE  PROFIT           VALUE
---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------
   45 Centipede        vid   101       13.00   0.00  13.00    6.50     1.17        6.71      1.17    -2.55    -53.10    250
      Main Event       vid   174       37.50   0.00  37.50    0.00    35.09        6.71     12.25   -16.55   -115.07    750
                             174       41.50   0.00  41.50    0.00    35.09        6.71      7.00    -7.30    -63.45    600
                                                                      71.34       20.14     20.62   -26.40    -86.03   1600
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                                                                                   DATE PRINTED:  08/16/89
PROFIT! CONTROL SYSTEM
PROFIT REPORT FOR: 135 -- ZAK'S PIZZA -- Dixyland Mall
LAST COLLECTION DATE:  08/15/89
=========================================================================================================
ASSET   EQUIPMENT NAME    TYPE  CURRENT   REVENUE  COGS  GROSS   SPLIT TO  COLLECTION  OVERHEAD  DEPREC.  NET     ROI    ASSET
NUMBER                          LOCATION                 PROFIT  LOCATION  COST        EXPENSE   EXPENSE  PROFIT         VALUE
---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------
   53 Pole Position    vid   135       34.00   0.00  34.00   17.00     3.50        6.71      6.20     2.59    29.98   650
   55 Taxi             pin   135       88.00   0.00  88.00   44.00     3.50        6.71     15.17    18.62    74.69  1300
                                               0.00          16.13     3.50        6.71      5.83     0.08     0.83   500
                                                                                                     2.87    59.88   250
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PROFIT! CONTROL SYSTEM
PROFIT REPORT FOR: 174 -- SILVER DOLLAR ARCADE -- South Pines Mall                 DATE PRINTED:  08/15/89
LAST COLLECTION DATE:  08/07/89
=========================================================================================================
ASSET   EQUIPMENT NAME    TYPE  CURRENT   REVENUE  COGS  GROSS   SPLIT TO  COLLECTION  OVERHEAD  DEPREC.  NET      ROI      ASSET
NUMBER                          LOCATION                 PROFIT  LOCATION  COST        EXPENSE   EXPENSE  PROFIT            VALUE
---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------
   13 Main Event       vid   174       35.00   0.00   35.00   0.00    35.09        6.71     12.25   -19.05   -132.45    750
   15 Cyberball        vid   174      175.50   0.00  175.50   0.00    35.09        6.71     18.67   115.03    299.91   2000
                       vid   174      101.00   0.00  101.00   0.00    35.09        6.71     39.20    20.00     37.24   2800
                                                      95.25   0.00    35.09        6.71     11.08    42.37    232.53    950
                                                                                   6.71     21.00    85.95    248.98   1800
                                                                                                                       1750
```

```
PROFIT! CONTROL SYSTEM
REVENUE REPORT FOR: 278 -- VIDEO THEATRE -- 4587 Windsome Road
LAST COLLECTION DATE:  09/05/89
=========================================================================================================
ASSET#  EQUIPMENT NAME   TYPE  LOC   REVENUE  DAYS  08/29/89  08/22/89  08/15/89  08/07/89  PTD CUM.  PERM. CUM.  PCT +/-  LAST LOC.
                                                                                                    DATE PRINTED:  09/06/89
---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------
   59  Operation Wolf    vid   278     60.25    7     70.00     82.50     88.50     80.25    381.50     381.50     -13.93
   62  Superman          vid   278     53.25    7     48.50     44.50     47.75     56.00    250.50     250.50      10.82
                                      101.00    7    108.50    103.75    101.25     98.50    513.00
                                                               16.75     14.75
```

```
*****************************************************************
SUMMARY PROFIT AND LOSS STATEMENT
PERIOD ENDING WITH POSTING DATE: 08/07/89            DATE: 08/15/89
ALL LOCATION INCLUDED
-----------------------------------------------------------------

REVENUE COLLECTED .................. $  2407.25      (%)
                                                    100.00
LESS: Cost of Goods ..............         11.49
                                                      0.48
GROSS PROFIT .....................    ---------     ------
                                         2395.76     99.52
  Location Commissions ..   449.77
  Collection Costs ......   532.07                   18.68
  Administrative Overhead   216.79                   22.10
  Depreciation Expenses .   470.72                    8.92
TOTAL EXPENSES ....................                  19.55
                                         1669.36     69.26
NET PROFIT BEFORE TAXES ...........    ---------    ------
                                    $     728.40     30.26
ANNUALIZED RETURN ON INVESTMENT         =========
TOTAL ASSET VALUE .................       43.91%
                                        37842.91
```

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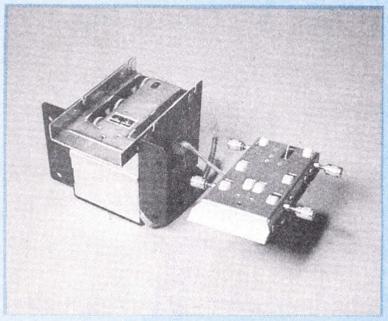


Bill acceptor

Grayhound Electronics introduces a specially designed bill acceptor/validator that offers easy access, simple repair, and a compact size. The dimensions are 2-3/4 inches wide, four inches high, and five inches deep.

The unit accepts all U.S. currencies: $1, $2, $5, $10, $20, $50, and $100 bills. There are four dip switch-selectable options: $1 bills only; $1/$2/$5 bills only; $1/$2/$5/$10/$20 bills only; or all seven denominations.

For more information, contact Grayhound Electronics Inc., Rt. 37 and Germania Station Road, P.O. Box 1697, Toms River, NJ 08754; (800) 222-0491 or (201) 341-5200; FAX (201) 341-6560.

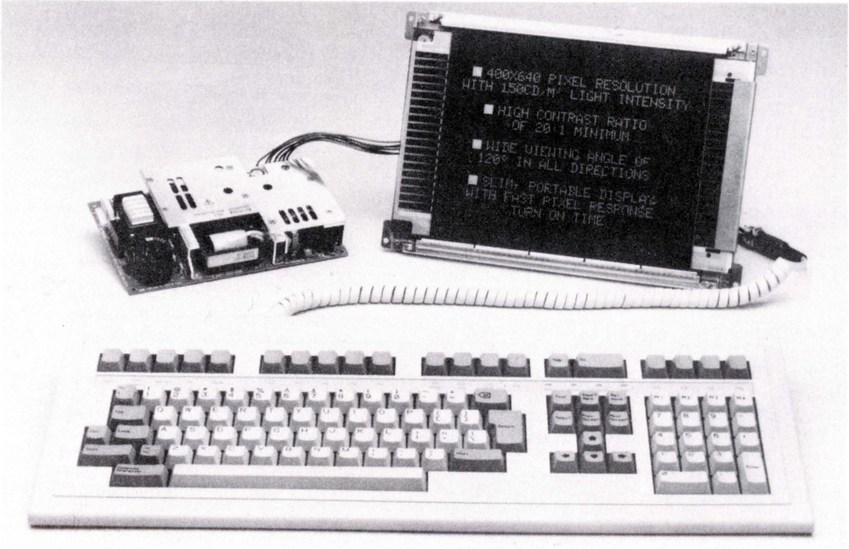
Evaluation kit

Densitron Corporation has unveiled its exclusive DT61 OEM plasma computer terminal evaluation kit. The kit offers a fast, easy approach to integrating an RS232 flat panel computer into a wide variety of OEM and VAR applications. The DT61 is the world's first flat panel OEM terminal with the DEC VT220-compatible software emulation.

The kit provides the following application benefits: it replaces existing CRT terminals with a slim, portable, low-power plasma display terminal; locates the terminal up to 65 feet from your host computer; develops your text and graphics application software faster by using the powerful VT220 emulation command set; and packages the compact terminal into a small area.

The cost of the kit is $1,775. The price includes a 400 x 640 high contrast, neon-orange plasma display; terminal controller with a complete VT220 emulation resident in EPROM on the board; fully compatible keyboard; power supply; complete set of cables; and a 5-1/4'' or 3-1/2'' floppy disk with demonstration software. Delivery is two to three weeks.

For more information, contact Gordon Gibson, Product Manager, Densitron Corp., 2540 W. 237th St., Torrance, CA 90505; (213) 530-3530; FAX (213) 534-8419.


■ 400X640 PIXEL RESOLUTION WITH 150CD/M² LIGHT INTENSITY
■ HIGH CONTRAST RATIO OF 20:1 MINIMUM
■ WIDE VIEWING ANGLE OF 120° IN ALL DIRECTIONS
■ SLIM, PORTABLE DISPLAY WITH FAST PIXEL RESPONSE TURN ON TIME

Coin counter

Universal Machine Co. has redesigned and technologically enhanced its Model 360 high-speed coin counter. The unit's new CBX microprocessor incorporates the latest in electronic technology.

The microprocessor's features include a sealed 16-position, smooth-surface keyboard with tactile feedback; dual six-digit LED displays; data retention in case of power loss; an anti-jam feature that automatically detects and clears coin jams; and automatic power shut-off when left unattended.

The CBX controller also allows the operator to record transactions on an optional data printer or transmit data to an external computer via an RS-232 communication port. Data is stored by batch and includes the date, identification code, batch number, coin quantity, denomination, and monetary total.

For more information, contact Universal Machine Co. Inc., 1512 Osprey, Suite 107, DeSoto, TX 75115-2411; (214) 224-3501; FAX (214) 224-6434.

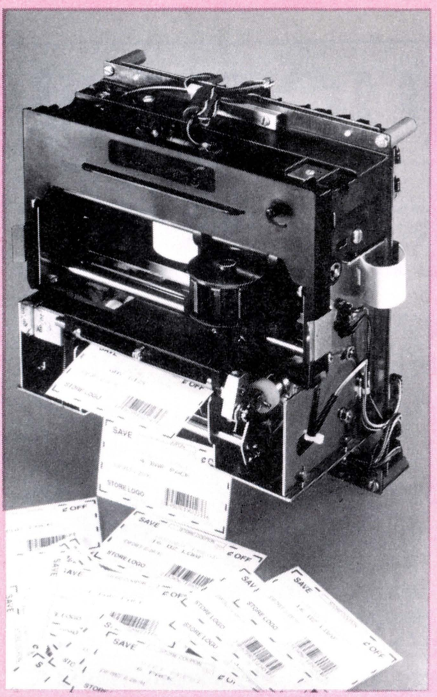
Sales software

Evergreen Ventures has released Version 2 of "The Sales Associate System," a sales productivity software package for the IBM PC, PS/2, and compatible computers. It offers an integrated letter-writing capability that automatically interfaces with the customer and prospect lists. Version 2 sells for $79.95, a 35 percent price reduction from Version 1.

This software package includes the 250-page "Sales Associate Book," a sales primer on how to use the personal computer in sales; six application modules of sales software, covering such subjects as the customer/prospect mailing list, sales call records, strategic planning, sales forecasting and order tracking, sales planning, and mass marketing evaluation; 20 pre-designed sales reports and mailing labels; a full-functioned Data Base Management System (DBMS) with a custom report writer and letter writer program; and a completely revised software guidebook.

For more information, contact Evergreen Ventures, P.O. Box 445, Voorhees, NJ 08043; (609) 753-0758.

Ticket printer



Singer Data Products introduces a ticket printer version of its Model 240 OEM printing mechanism. It offers the OEM such features as a continuous duty print head; modular replacement of individual modules; a rotary cutter; bar code printing; full ASCII and graphics; and a long-life red/black ribbon.

Incorporating the SDP Model 200 print head and over 300 million characters, the mechanism is designed for applications where millions of tickets, receipts, or forms are to be issued with minimal maintenance. Available with serial or parallel inputs, the modular design lends itself to custom configurations for the individual OEM application, be it mechanisms or mechanism and controller board.

The printer is available in 30 to 60 days. Price is dependent on the customer's configuration.

For more information, contact Singer Data Products Inc., 790 Maple Lane, Bensenville, IL 60106; (708) 860-6500; FAX (708) 860-3672. ☐

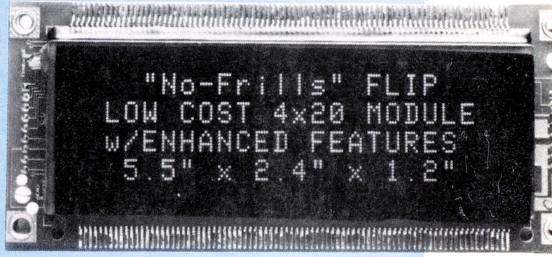
Display modules

The Industrial Products Division of IEE has added a new display to its enhanced "No-Frills" line of FLIP vacuum fluorescent display modules. Display Model 3601-90-080 provides four lines of 20 characters, which are 0.2 inches high in a package that measures only 5.5 inches wide, 2.4 inches high, and 1.2 inches deep. This low-cost display module is ideal for high-volume OEM use in business, communications, and industrial applications.

The on-board microprocessor controller handles all scan refresh and data I/O tasks, permitting easy interface to an eight-bit ASCII parallel data bus. Both power and data connections are on a single connector, which also provides for hardware "RESET" and "BUSY" signals. Only +5 VDC is required for operation.

The module's character generator provides the full 96-character U.S. ASCII character set, plus additional European characters in upper and lower case for a total of 171 characters. In addition, the module can accept several user-defined, downloadable characters in a 5 x 7 dot matrix format. The characters are a bright blue-green for comfortable long-term or short-term viewing. A wide range of color filters is available for various applications.

The model is priced at $134 (in hundreds); availability is four to six weeks ARO. For more information, contact IEE, Industrial Products Division Sales Office, 7740 Lemona Ave., Van Nuys, CA 91409-9234; (818) 787-0311, extension 418.



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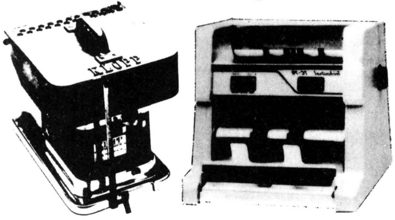

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yie Ar Kung Fu	100

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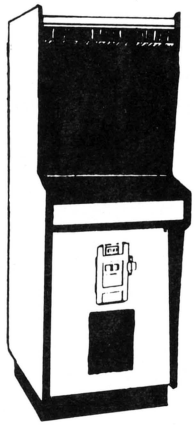

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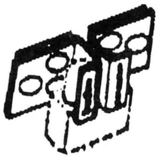

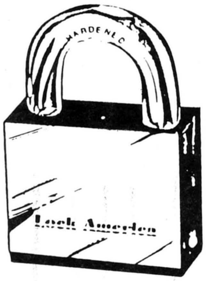

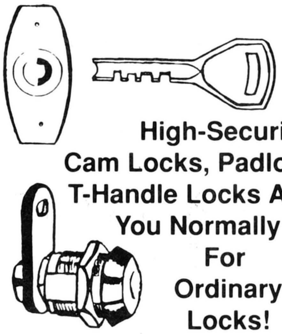

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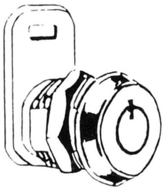

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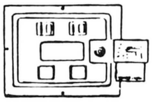

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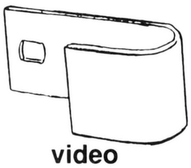

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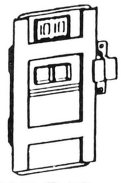

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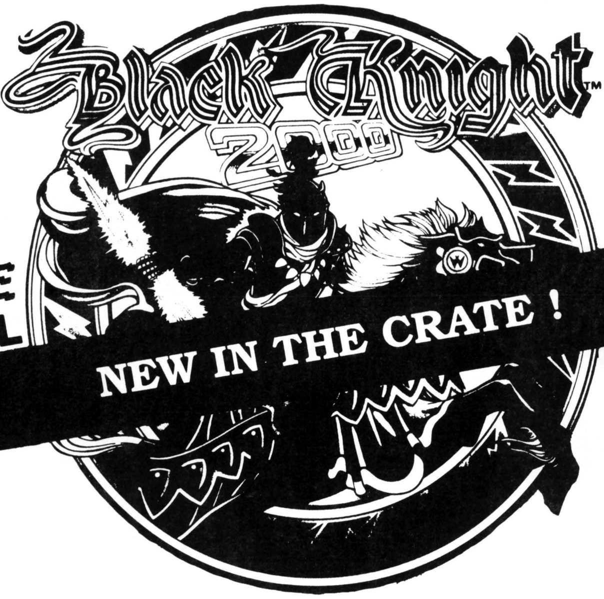

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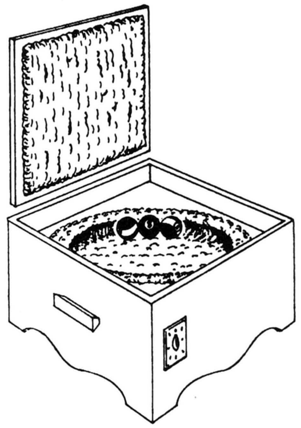

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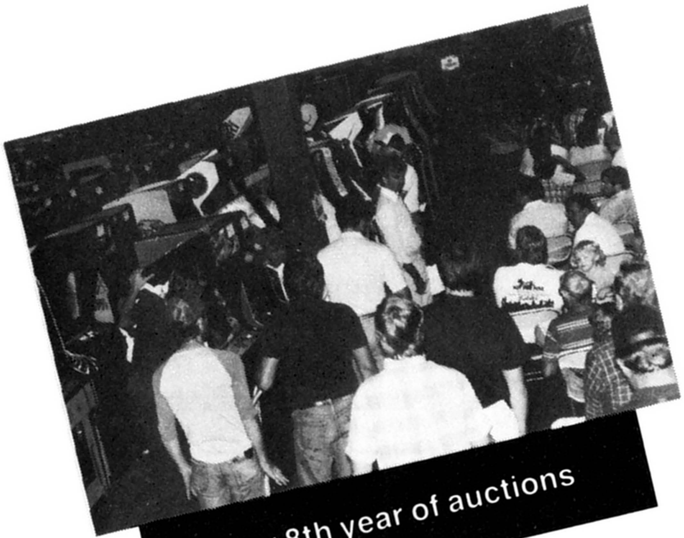

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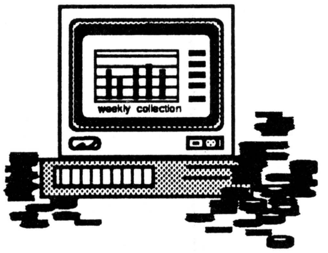

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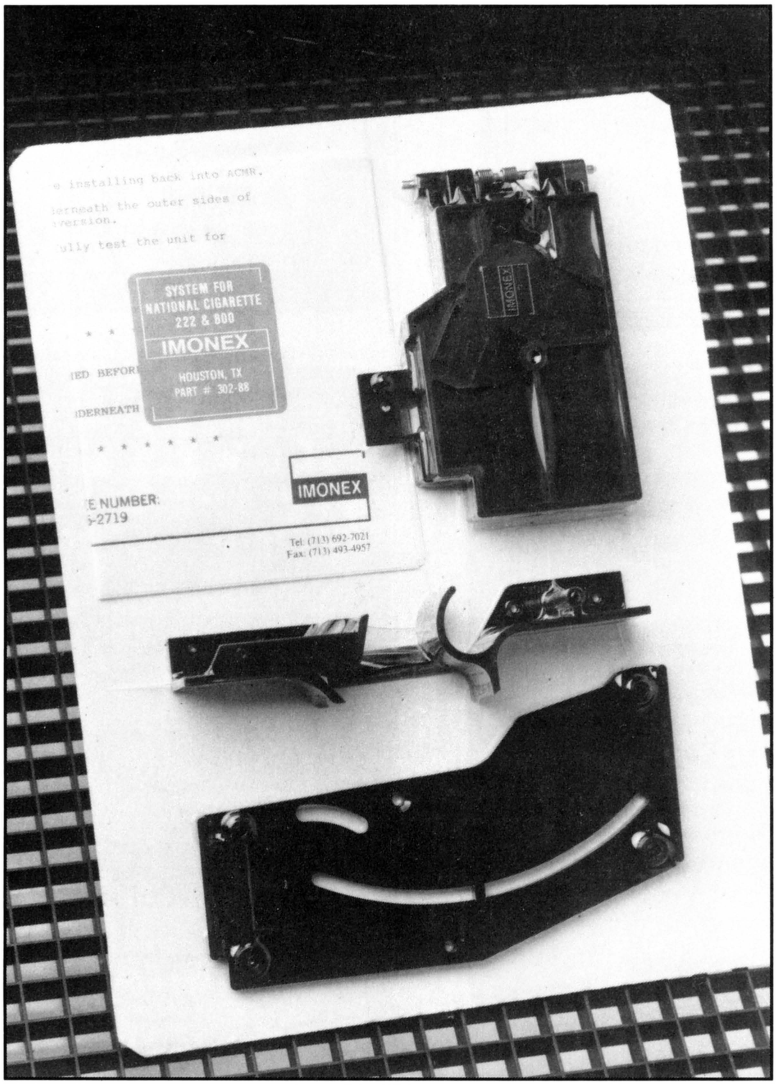
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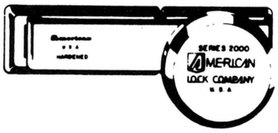

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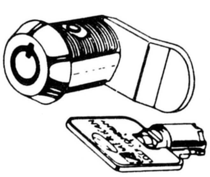

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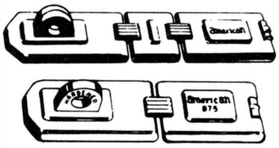

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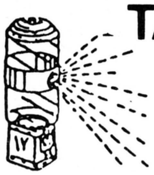

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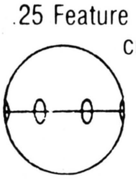

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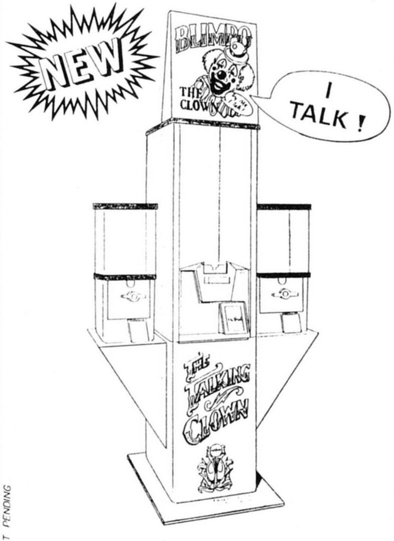

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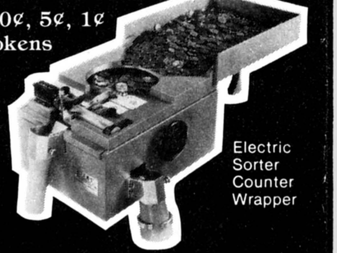

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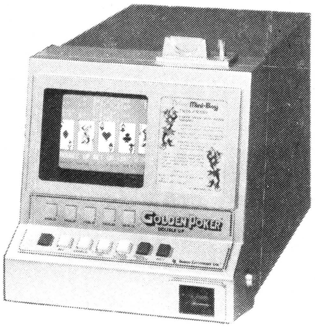

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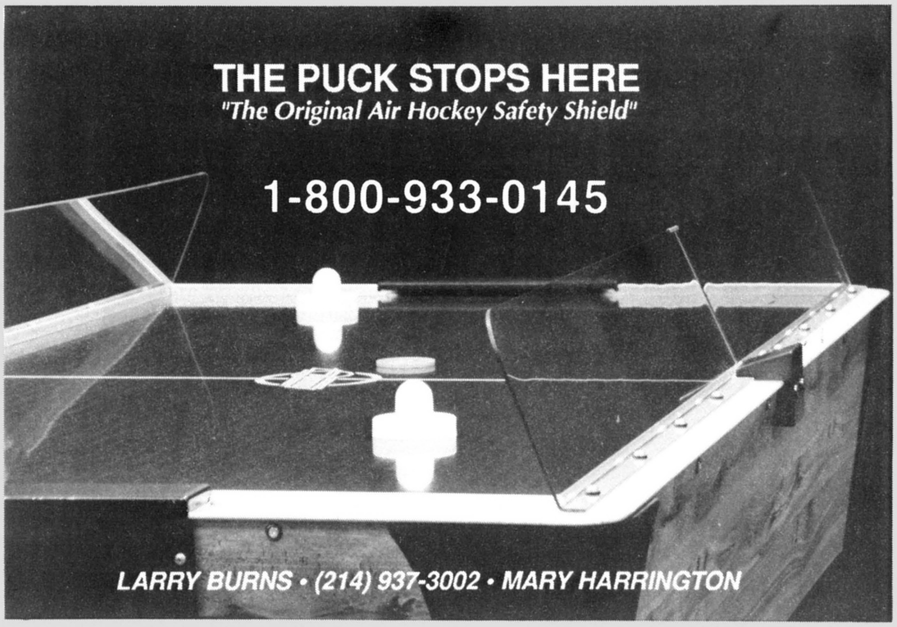

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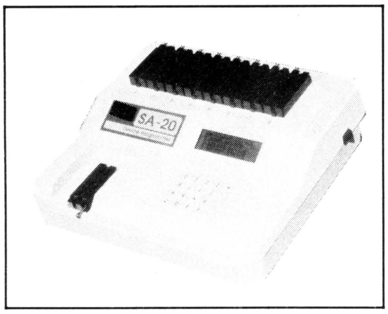

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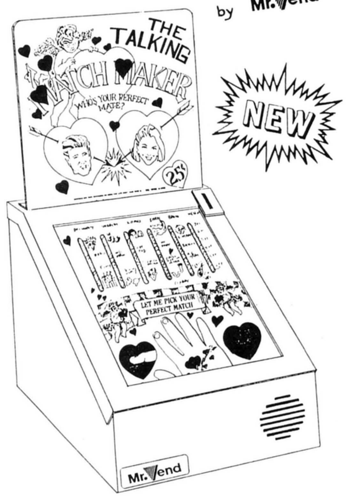

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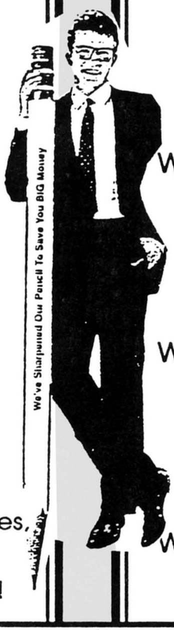
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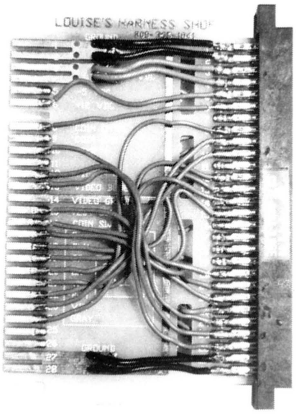

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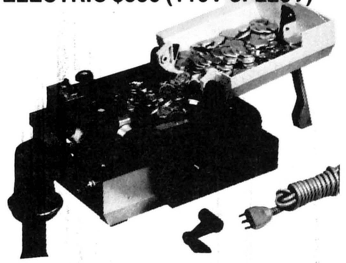

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THE CALENDAR

June 7-9
Wisconsin Amusement and Music Operators Association (WAMO) Spring Convention and Trade Show, Holiday Inn, Stevens Point, Wis. Contact WAMO (414) 529-4704.

June 15-17
Illinois Coin Machine Operators Association (ICMOA) Annual Meeting, Clarion Inn at Eagle Creek, Findley, Ill. Contact Ellen Donovan (708) 369-2406.

June 18-23
Randy Fromm's Arcade School, Las Vegas. Contact Randy Fromm (619) 697-4035.

July 5-10
Coors Light World Series of Bar Games Grand Finale, Las Vegas, Nev. Contact Arachnid Inc. (800) 435-8319 or (815) 644-0212.

July 13-15
Montana Coin Machine Operators Association (MCMOA) Summer Meeting, Chico Hot Springs Resort. Contact Chris Warren (406) 442-7088 or Phil Benson (406) 543-5119.

July 19-20
Pennsylvania Amusement and Music Machine Association (PAMMA) Annual Trade Show, Sheraton-Lancaster Resort. Contact PAMMA (800) 521-7778 (in Pa.) or (717) 232-5322 (outside Pa).

July 19-21
Billiard Congress of America 7th Annual International Trade Expo, Commonwealth Convention Center, Louisville, Ky. Contact Frank Zdy (619) 278-3877; FAX 619-268-9372.

August 10-12
North Dakota Coin Machine Operators Association (NDCMOA) Annual Meeting and Show, Radisson Hotel, Fargo, N.D. Contact S.K. Paulus (701) 223-7588.

August 15-18
National Automatic Merchandising Association (NAMA) National Education Conference, Ambassador West Hotel, Chicago. Contact Richard Geerdes (312) 346-0370.

August 17-18
The 32nd Annual Convention and Trade Show of the Amusement and Music Operators of Virginia (AMOV), Cavalier Hotel, Virginia Beach, Va. Contact Charles Rowland (804) 262-9283.

August 17-19
Amusement Music Operators of Tennessee (AMOT) General Membership Meeting and Trade Show, Stouffer Nashville Hotel, Nashville, Tenn. Contact Jan Green (901) 521-1234 or (601) 371-1000.

September 13-16
North Carolina Coin Operators Association (NCCOA) Annual Convention and Trade Show, Charlotte Marriott Executive Park, Charlotte, N.C. Contact Bobby or Cindy Earp (919) 584-4833.

September 17-22
Randy Fromm's Arcade School, Chicago. Contact Randy Fromm (619) 697-4035.

October 11-14
National Automatic Merchandising Association (NAMA) National Convention and Exhibit of Vending and Foodservice Management, Orange County Convention/Civic Center, Orlando, Fla. Contact NAMA (312) 346-0370.

October 25-27
Amusement and Music Operators Association (AMOA) Expo '90, New Orleans Convention Center, New Orleans. Contact AMOA (312) 644-6610.

October 25—Nov. 3
Randy Fromm's Arcade School, New Orleans. Contact Randy Fromm (619) 697-4035.

1991

April 19-21
National Automatic Merchandising Association (NAMA) Western Convention and Exhibit of Vending and Foodservice Management, Anaheim Convention Center, Anaheim, Calif. Contact NAMA (312) 346-0370.

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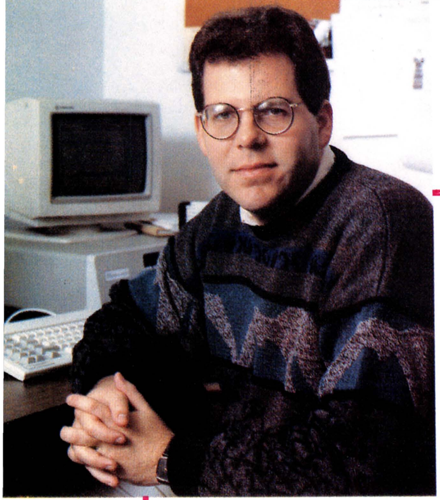

THE LAST WORD

Would you print this?

Excuse me, but I'm grouchy. Maybe my bio-rhythms are out of kilter, or perhaps Jupiter is aligned with Mars. Celestially rooted or not, things haven't been going my way. Just yesterday, some derelict in a pickup truck obeyed an unofficial rule of driving in New Orleans. He took advantage of the 20-second grace period given to those who've happened upon a light turning red, smashing into me broadside and totaling my car.

Since I'm loaded with venom, I'll spew some on to this page. One thing that never fails to bug me are complaints regarding a decision to print a certain item. Every journalistic organ faces this; we aren't alone by a long shot. I'm not referring to hearsay that's three parties removed, such as, ''John told Ed, who told me, that...'' No, what I'm talking about are solid, irrefutable facts that Play Meter readers deserve—and often *need*—to be apprised of.

The person or company doing the complaining will often agree that yes, the information we received is true; yes, he has been indicted, or the company has been caught paying off on video pokers and/or running counterfeit boards; yes, the Federal Trade Commission is putting heat on the company for improper activity; yes, he did receive eight messages from Play Meter, asking that he call to comment on the story. The list could go on and on.

Let someone who champions the need for a free, unrestrained press get caught doing something he shouldn't. Want to see a Jeckyl and Hyde transformation in a flash? The incredulous attitude is something to behold. ''Sure it happened; why pick on me? I can't believe you'd print that! You're going to be sorry, buster!'' Of course, if the same thing were being printed about his business rival, sadistic squeals of delight would fill the air.

I'm going to let you join in on the editorial meeting. The following are hypothetical situations facing the magazine, and it's deadline day. The printer is barking, ''If I don't get everything by 5 p.m., your June issue will be late! Hurry, hurry!'' How would you resolve these thorny problems?

* We've just received word that a major manufacturer is on the verge of going out of business. The president of the company pleads with us to not print anything yet. ''Give us some time to straighten things out,'' he begs. ''If you make it known that we're in dire straits, operators will avoid us like the plague—which will surely kill us.''

Would you A) Do as he asks and hold off? B) Go with the story now, knowing that operators might be saddled with product from a soon-to-be-defunct company? C) Print the story, but in such a way that the situation doesn't sound as bleak? Remember, this *is* our largest advertiser.

* An operator who talks to you at every trade show, buys you drinks at the bar, and generally is a big supporter of the magazine has been busted for possession of copied PC boards. His route is littered with the contraband kits.

''I know this is newsworthy, and that you've printed stories like it in the past, but can't you suppress this for old-times sake?'' he asks. ''If this gets out my name will be mud, not to mention the embarrassment it'll cause my wife and kids. Please don't print it.''

Again, what would you do? Obviously, you don't want to cause this man any more pain. On the other hand, as a trade magazine committed to the ideals and ethics of journalism, is it not our *duty* to report items such as this one? Make a decision; it's 3:45 p.m.

* You get word that a kindred journalist, the highly respected Lou Perfidio of Vending Times, has been arrested for inciting a riot at a Public Enemy concert in New York. Being a likable guy, but misguided about rap music and its merits, would you A) Print the sordid details of his arrest, hoping it would make him see the light? B) Leave it to RePlay to report, feeling superior in the knowledge that Play Meter would *never* rat on a member of the writing fraternity? C) Run with the story, but sugarcoat it a bit? (''Sure, he got arrested, but give him a break. He is, after all, originally from Philadelphia.'')

This, dear readers, is what real professionals face. ''It's part of the territory, crawfish breath!'' you counter (I had to mention food somewhere). Maybe so. All I ask, however, is that when we find out about your questionable behavior, don't call asking for slack. The women here are ruthless. ☐

Christopher Caire

Christopher Caire
News Editor

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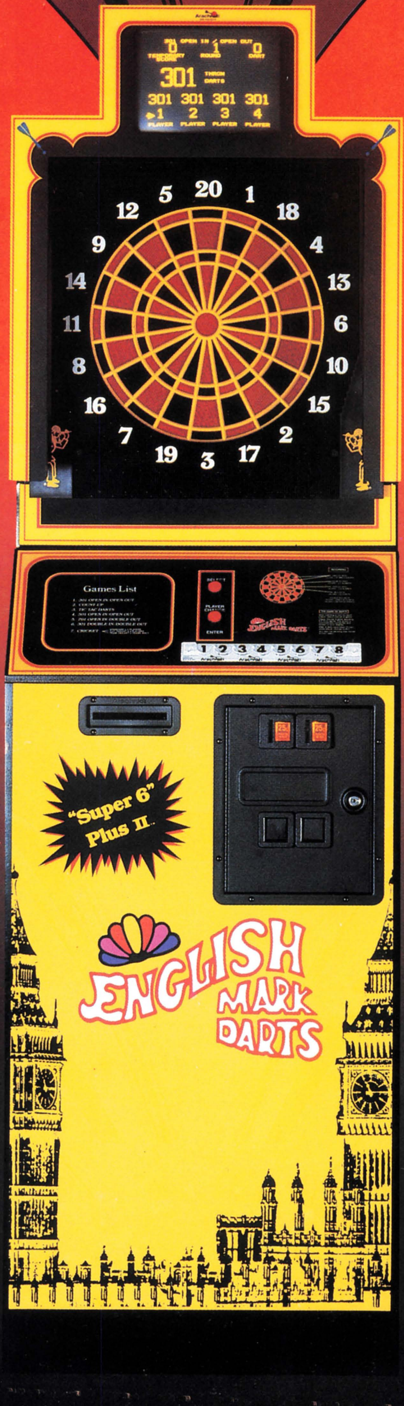

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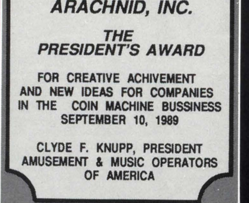

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In the future, terrorists rule the skies and the seas.

When special, top-secret packages like mutant virus strains and doomsday devices absolutely, positively have to get through, the only courier governments can call on is you — codename: Hydra.

With nine missions to complete, success rests on your ability to skillfully drive your trusty Hydracraft, using its supercharged speed and firepower to blast past enemy forces like boats, jet skis, zeppelins, choppers, fighters, hovercraft and halftracks.

For your customers, Hydra delivers a driving-flying-shooting game that explodes with fast-paced action, heart-pounding excitement and incredible animation on stunning, digitized landscapes.

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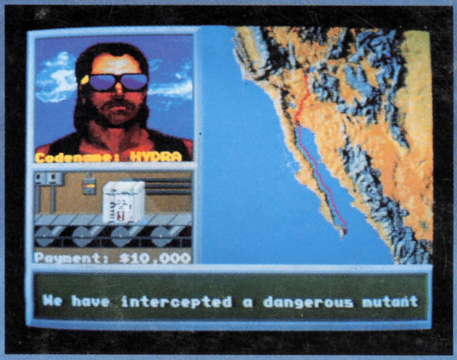


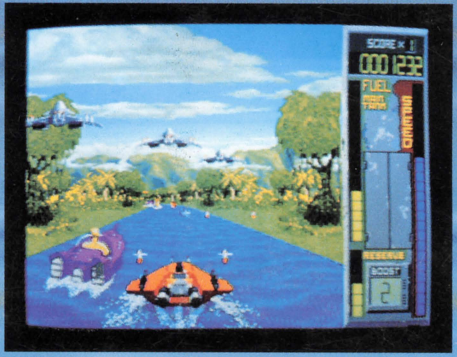
Codename: HYDRA

Payment: $10,000

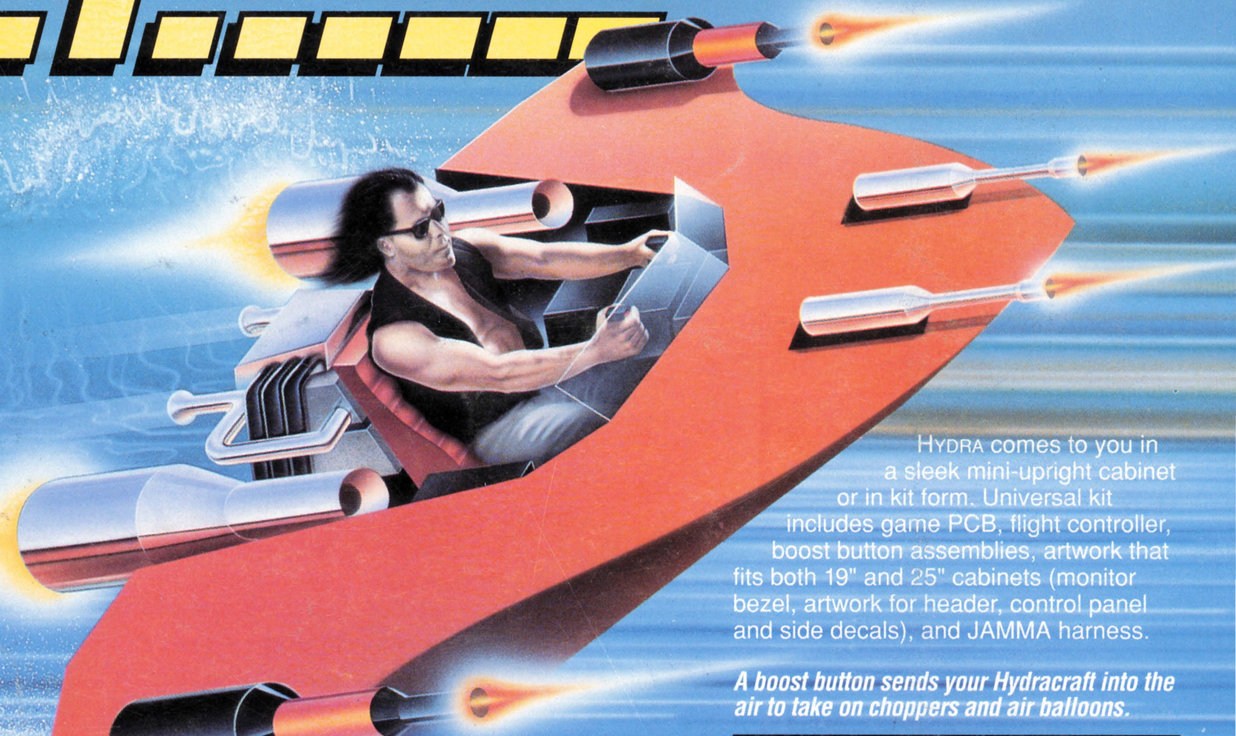
We have intercepted a dangerous mutant

SOMETIMES AIR MAIL JUST CAN'T GET THROUGH.

The waterways are filled with enemy craft; the skies rain missiles from deadly fighters.

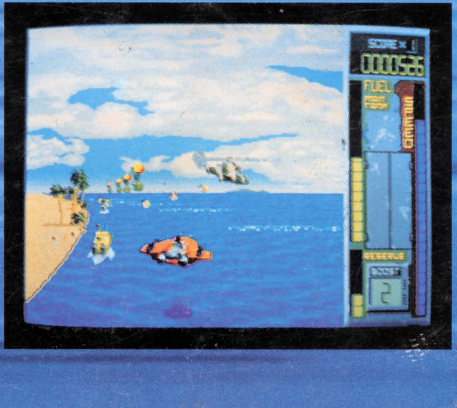


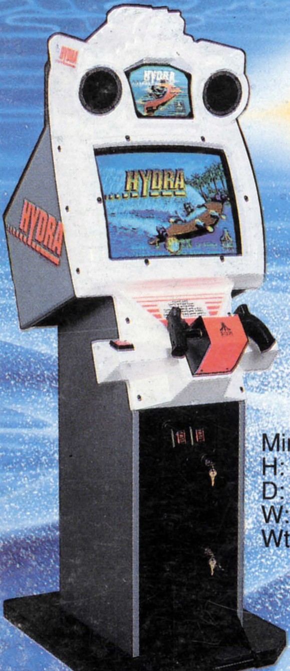
HYDRA™



HYDRA comes to you in a sleek mini-upright cabinet or in kit form. Universal kit includes game PCB, flight controller, boost button assemblies, artwork that fits both 19" and 25" cabinets (monitor bezel, artwork for header, control panel and side decals), and JAMMA harness.

A boost button sends your Hydracraft into the air to take on choppers and air balloons.





Mini-upright cabinet
H: 71" (180 cm)
D: 34" (86 cm)
W: 24" (61 cm)
Wt: 225 lbs (102 kg)

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